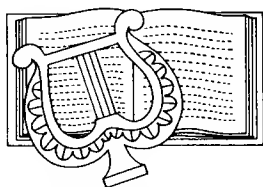


THE REBEL PRIVATEER



OR, THE LAST CRUISE OF THE BLACK ANGEL

Emory University Library



In Memoriam

Ruth Candler Lovett

1935-1964



THE
REBEL PRIVATEER;

OR,

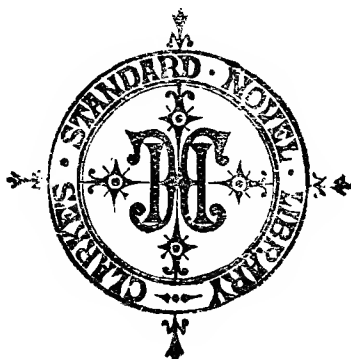
The Last Cruise of the Black Angel.

BY

W STEPHENS HAYWARD,

AUTHOR OF

“BLACK ANGEL”—“STAR OF THE SOUTH”—“FIERY CROSS”—“REBEL
PRIVATEER”—“LOVE’S TREASON”—“RODNEY RAY”—“TOM HOLT’S
LOG”—“LORD SCATTERBRAIN”—“WILD AND WONDERFUL”—
“LOVE AND ADVENTURE”—“DEMONS OF THE SEA”—
“CLOUD KING”—“MUTINY OF THE THUNDER”—
ETC., ETC., ETC.



LONDON:
CHARLES H. CLARKE, 9 RED LION COURT,
FLEET STREET.

CONTENTS.



CHAPTER	PAGE
I.—The Fiery Cross	1
II.—Running the Gantle	13
III.—Escape of the Fiery Cross	21
IV.—How the Old Unionist was tricked	26
V.—Hubert Glynne's Narrative	34
VI.—Preparations for the Cruise	40
VII.—The Start and the Chase	42
VIII.—The Rebel Privateer at Sea	50
IX.—The First Cruise, and what came of it	59
X.—Blockaded in Cienfuegos	62
XI.—Events at the Barr	77
XII.—Juliana Cordova	82
XIII.—Captain George gets a Fair Ally	87
XIV.—The Plan to Defeat the Yankee Signals	97
XV.—A Confession of Love	105
XVI.—An Eventful Day for the Cruiser	108
XVII.—The Signals—Yankee and Confederate	113
XVIII.—The Farther Adventures of the Fiery Cross	121
XIX.—The Fiery Cross goes into Action	127
XX.—After the Englishman's Escape	130
XXI.—What Enoch Allen saw through a Glass	137
XXII.—After Calm comes Storm	148
XXIII.—Captain George's Farther Adventures	155
XXIV.—The Despatch to the Mohican	168

CHAPTER	PAGE
XXV.—Juliana Fires the Rockets	170
XXVI.—The Fray at the Consul's	179
XXVII.—The Keys	192
XXVIII.—Captain George makes a Promise	195
XXIX.—The Escape	202
XXX.—Separation	205
XXXI.—A Gold Harvest	213
XXXII.—The Californian Mail Packet	231
XXXIII.—More Prizes	249
XXXIV.—News from Home	254
XXXV.—A Charming Actress, and her Admirer	260
XXXVI.—Lola Recounts her History	269
XXXVII.—A Daring Plot	279
XXXVIII.—Woman's Love	288
XXXIX.—An Interview with the President	294
XL.—Dolora's Ruse	301
XLI.—Abe Checkmates the Conspirators	303
XLII.—The Fell Resolve	310
XLIII.—Lola Found by her Father	314
XLIV.—Lola fails to keep her Appointment	326
XLV.—The Fatal Fourteenth of April	328
XLVI.—The Ocean Depot	331
XLVII.—The Last Cruise of the Black Angel	334

THE REBEL PRIVATEER.

CHAPTER I.

THE FIERY CROSS.

A DARK, gloomy night, the wind moaning dismally among the trees, the waves sullenly washing the shore.

The locality was as gloomy and dismal as the night, and as gloomy as either of the spirits of a little band assembled on the low swampy shore.

First we will speak of the place where is assembled this group, those composing which are important personages of our story.

New Orleans has some weeks back fallen to the Yankee invader, and is now being ruled with an iron rod by the tyrant, Benjamin Butler. The group of persons of whom we speak are assembled on the shore of one of the almost innumerable creeks called *bayous*, which pierce the shore at the entrance to Lake Pontchartrain, as it is wrongly called, for with a direct, though narrow, communication with the Gulf of Florida, Pontchartrain is rather an inland sea.

The party in question have taken up a position nearly at the end of a spit of swampy, sandy ground, on each side of which runs up a bayou inland. The spit of land is not more than a hundred and fifty or two hundred yards across at its broadest part, while a neck connecting it with the main land does not exceed forty yards.

This fact renders it easy of defence by a small force against a much larger one unprovided with artillery.

Those who have now possession of it have taken precautions which show that they are in danger of an attack, or ~~think~~ ^{think} themselves so.

Three small naval cannon have been mounted on a rough

fortification of pine logs, so as to command the narrowest part. Assuredly these guns well served, and aided by the sixty or seventy rifles and carbines of the little force, might give good account of a strong regiment.

A gap has been purposely left in the extempore breast-work for a path, which by constant tramping has been beaten into the semblance of a regular road.

Backwards and forwards along this road from the main land, horses and mules, with loads, rough waggons creaking and jolting, and even men bearing burdens on their backs, are constantly passing.

A great pile of pine-wood logs, too, is being collected near the end of the little promontory.

A spectator, unacquainted with the facts, might look around and wonder as to the meaning of all this labour and bustle, and the purpose with which the great pile of wood is assiduously collected.

But though the night is cloudy and dismal, there may be discerned at times, through the gloom, the outline of a ship, lying moored head and stern, not more than fifty yards from the shore on the lee side of the spit.

No light is to be seen on her decks, but a column of black smoke and occasional sparks shooting aloft proclaim the fact that she is furnished with steam power. Her rig, too, can be made out at times when the clouds break a little—that of a barque, with short, raking masts and long yard-arms. She carries only a main topgallant-yard, the fore not being crossed.

As seen dimly through the gloom she appears like a low, black line on the water, evidently deeply laden.

And looking still closer, the spectator may see boats constantly plying to and fro between this vessel and the shore. As fast as the wood pile is increased by the labours of those on land, it is diminished by the crews of the boats who are busily engaged in transferring the logs to the vessel.

Already there is quite a huge pile on her deck rising above the bulwarks, and giving the vessel a clumsy top-heavy appearance.

Stores and provisions of all kinds are being transported on board, and also ammunition and arms.

Obviously the holders of the strip of land have various parties out in the country round about, for not a quarter of an hour passes without a load of some kind being brought through the entrenchment and deposited on the beach ready for being transferred on board the little steamer.

At the moment of which we speak there are some forty men and one or two women on the low, sandy promontory.

But there are many more out about the country, and also some twenty who go to form a chain of sentries in order to give early warning of the approach of an enemy.

That enemy is the Yankee force holding New Orleans ; for be it known that these people are all pestilent rebels, as the Northerners chose to call them. Men who had, the greater part of them, fought valiantly for the young Confederacy in the battle-field.

All who there assembled were prepared to do battle for their country—the Southern States of America.

New Orleans, where was the Yankee force under General Butler, and off which city lay the great fleet under Farragut, was distant only some six or seven miles, so these rebels had reason to keep watch and ward against surprise.

Fortunately the whole country around was on their side.

The Yankees at present were masters only of the ground they occupied, and found themselves in the midst of a hostile though, at present, helpless population.

These men of whom we speak worked hard and with a right good will. But it is noticeable that they worked in silence.

There was plenty of fierce determination apparent, but all looked gloomy, sullen, and dispirited.

To every true Southerner the fall of New Orleans—the commercial capital of the South and by far the largest city in all the Confederate States—was a heavy, almost a disheartening blow. The full force of the disaster was in a measure mitigated by the news of great victories in the field elsewhere, but nothing short of decisive triumph could atone to the Mississippi and Louisiana men for the loss of their beautiful city.

Many and deep were the curses muttered against the insolent invaders, bitter the threats of future vengeance in the battle field against the Yankee hords—the defilers of their homes, insulters of their women.

And now for a glance at a group of officers and others, who, standing and sitting apart, did not share in the actual manual labour, but contented themselves with directing and supervising the operations.

So willingly did the men work, however, that but little direction was needful. An order given in a low tone occasionally was all that was needed, and all through the night the work went on vigorously.

Foremost among those to whom we wish to direct particular attention is a tall, handsome young man, very pale, and with one arm in a sling. His eyes glitter fiercely, and ever and anon, as he paces up and down, he mutters to himself.

This is Hubert Glynne—a young Mississippi planter and Confederate colonel, lately wounded in the desperate battle of Shiloh, one of the many rebel victories.

Presently his attention is attracted by a dull red glare on the horizon, far away to the west.

“Ay, there they go again—pillage, murder, and arson! Glorious work for brave soldiers, truly. Bah!—all that such a ruffian hord are fit for. They dare not meet us man to man, foot to foot, in the open field. We have thrashed them again and again, and so we shall again if they dare make a fair stand.”

Then, turning, he called to some one among the group.

“Stanton, come here.”

It was his brother—a young man in a loose naval undress—to whom he spoke.

“See you yonder glare?”

“Yes, brother.”

“It is in the direction of the Yancey estate—our plantation. It is most probable that the vindictive cowards, furious at my escape, have sought this means of vengeance. I have eluded them—me they cannot reach, but they wreak their spite on my property, and on the property of those dear to me. They cannot harm me now,

but they can beggar and impoverish our dear sister Maude. Ten million curses on their cowardly heads!"

Then spoke a young and beautiful girl—the said sister Maude—who had joined her brothers—

"Fear not for me, dear Hubert. Now that you have escaped from their cruel hands I care not, though I am utterly penniless. Besides, I have no reason to fear. I am only a weak girl, and cannot make war against the Federal troops."

"No," said Stanton Glynne; "but you can give us your sympathies and your prayers, and *that* is crime sufficient in their eyes for any atrocity."

Just at that time there came in two negro messengers.

Although the fire, the lurid glare of which they saw in the sky, was miles and miles away, the news as to where it was flew apace.

"De Jarsey plantation house and all de buildin's is a blazin'. A lot of Yankee soldiers go out dis arternoon to look for Massa Glynne for to hang him, an' when dey no cotch him, they smash up eberytin and den set fire."

Hubert, Stanton, and Maude Glynne gazed in silence for some time at the flames of their burning home, which momentarily blazed fiercer and fiercer.

"There goes the old house at home," said Hubert, bitterly; "the old place where we were born and played as children, Maude."

Gentle Maude Glynne was weeping now, but hot-blooded Stanton swore a fierce oath.

"I will be revenged for this. If once we get clear out to sea with this little craft of ours, the blazing hulls of scores of the enemy's merchantmen shall in part atone for this outrage. Ha, ha! Once on the open sea, with our gallant little privateer, if we don't go far to drive the Yankee commerce off the face of the ocean, my name's not Stanton Glynne."

Hubert said little, but the deadly pallor of his face, and the way in which he ground his teeth, told of the rage which burned in his heart.

And now these three were joined by two other persons, a young man of middle height, strong, but rather spare

frame, and complexion bronzed by years of adventure in many climes. His face was handsome, his eyes a clear grey, bright, and keen. His carriage, his look, everything about him, bespoke a daring intrepid spirit.

He was an Englishman, and from choice and sympathy had joined the Confederate cause.

He, too, had fought in more than one battle, and, like his friend Hubert Glynne, had been wounded, though not very severely, at the battle of Shiloh.

He was an Englishman, and was known by the curt and simple appellation, Captain George.

His companion was a female, young, and very handsome.

She was called Lola, but her name in full was Dolora Velasco.

Some of those present on this night were acquainted with a part of the history of this young lady, but the majority only knew her as the intimate friend of Miss Maude Glynne.

The reader, however, shall in subsequent chapters be informed of sufficient for all purposes of this tale.

She was one of those dark, splendid beauties so seldom seen out of Spain or Italy, or in cases where there is a tinge of Creole blood.

Her clear olive complexion, abundant dark hair, and large flashing eyes would always attract attention, but when in addition we state that her features were almost faultlessly beautiful, her form moulded in nature's fairest mould, the reader will understand that she was very, very lovely.

Her voice was musical but rather deep toned, her every action and motion replete with grace.

"Oh! Lola, dear Lola," cried Maude Glynne, "they are burning our old house. What cruel, cruel men!"

"Alas! it is sad, indeed," the girl said, slowly; "but my heart misgives me that this is but the beginning, that there are greater disasters yet in store for those who do battle under the bonnie blue flag—ruin, defeat, death."

"Lola, you are a bird of ill omen. It is unkind of you, and exceedingly ill-timed to prophesy evil for us now. I thought you were a friend."

He spoke hotly, and without considering. Lola bowed her head in silence, and tears started to her eyes.

"Hubert," cried Maude Glynne, "what are you saying? Think for one moment of all you owe to Lola. But for her faithful devotion and brave heart you would ere this have been hanged. This very morning was to have witnessed your execution, and had she not contrived your escape at the peril of her own life, the sentence would certainly have been carried out."

Hubert Glynne looked abashed and ashamed of himself, and was about to speak, but his brother Stanton broke in—

"You have not told me all about this, Hubert. I have not heard the particulars of your escape from the Yankees, nor how this girl was involved in it."

Maude looked at him reproachfully, and laid her hand in his arm.

"You forget, Stanton, that Lola is a friend of mine."

"Oh! ah! yes; I did forget; but what about this affair of the escape?"

"There is no time," said Hubert, "to tell a long tale. We are every instant in expectation of an attack. It is quite certain that the enemy will by means of spies and traitors hear of our rendezvous at this place before long. A body of sixty or seventy men cannot encamp within seven miles of the city without the enemy soon hearing of it. I will tell you all about it once we get safely on board. As for you, dear Lola," he went on, turning to the girl, "I ask your pardon. I owe you my life; twice you have come forward; once you saved me, saved us all from an imminent danger; and now again but last night you rescued me from certain death. Lola, forgive me."

And, as he spoke, he took her hand and kissed it.

"My good angel," he said, "I can never be sufficiently grateful."

Lola trembled a little, her bosom heaved, she felt as though she would burst into tears, and without a word withdrew.

"You seem to make a great fuss about that slave girl," said Stanton Glynne, carelessly.

"Stanton," cried Maude, indignantly, "she is not a

slave girl, and but for her Hubert would now be dead, executed by hanging. You do not know, you cannot know all that dear Lola has done for us."

"You did not tell me that she was free; you said you were going to present her with her papers. I knew she was one of our slaves."

"Let this subject drop, Stanton, if you please; this is no time for entering into long explanations."

"Hark! what was that?"

It was Captain George who spoke, and all listened intently.

"I am convinced I heard a shout; one of our sentries challenged."

"I heard nothing."

"Nor I."

"Nor I."

"It might have been my fancy, but I could almost have sworn I heard the familiar challenge—'Who goes there?'"

The words were scarcely out of his mouth than the sharp report of a rifle was heard in the forest, apparently about half a mile away.

After an interval of a few seconds there came another; then another, and another, till it swelled into a smart spluttering fire.

Then there came shouts, and the well-known and well-remembered rebel yell.

And then a grand crashing volley, which told that a considerable body of troops—a regiment at least—were advancing on the little stronghold.

"I thought we could not be many hours here without being discovered," said Captain Glynne, quietly.

"Stop work. To your arms, my men. The enemy are upon us," shouted Hubert Glynne.

There was instantly a great rushing to and fro, which looked like confusion and panic, although it was nothing of the sort, for every man knew his post, and what he had to do.

"Captain George," said Hubert—his glowing look giving place to enthusiasm as the well-known battle music fell on his ear—"you and Stanton see to getting

Lola and Maude on board and in safety. You can't do better than take my friend the Englishman as your first lieutenant."

"Agreed," said Stanton.

"I accept," said Captain George.

"Come, ladies, to the boat. We must get you out of danger; the enemy are coming on at a trot."

"I'll d— soon stop them," said Hubert Glynne, grimly. "Light the wood piles at the edge of the wood," he shouted at the top of his voice. "Artillerymen, to your guns. Man the breast-work. Hurrah for the 'Stars and Bars!'"

A shout followed these words, and in half a minute his orders were obeyed, and all along the skirt of the pine forest through which the enemy must advance red flames twinkled, which quickly blazed up into great bonfires, lighting up the darkness among the trees for many yards.

This was an admirable precaution on the part of the little band; for these fires were at a sufficient distance from the pine-log fortification to leave the defenders in the dark, while a body of men advancing from the woods would be in full view, and exposed to the deadly rifle fire of some of the best shots in Mississippi.

This was a great advantage, and disastrous to the enemy.

For a few minutes some of the sentries and outposts came running in, and then two wounded men, borne each by four of his comrades.

The fire ceased now, as the outposts being driven in, the enemy had no visible antagonists.

So soon as every man was safely within the entrenchment, Hubert Glynne, who assumed the command, as bearing the highest rank, ordered every man to conceal himself and keep silent.

The three ship's cannon were double loaded with grape-shot, and the artillerymen crouched by their pieces, prepared to open fire when the word was given. Each man armed with rifle or carbine, sought out a convenient place, and protruded his weapon through some chink in the logs, or perhaps over all, in order to get a good rest—

waited. Sixty barrels were turned with deadly intent on the wood through which the Yankee force was advancing.

It was a time of suspense and desperate excitement.

The steady tramp, tramp, of the advancing foemen could plainly be heard ; and Hubert Glynne, catching an occasional word of command, whispered—

“They are coming on in column, four deep. They will probably deploy into line when they come out into the open—then we will give them pepper.”

Meanwhile, Captain George and Stanton Glynne were busily engaged in getting the utmost amount of stores, ammunition, etc., on board. Then they caused all the rest to be placed on the top of the stack of pine logs which there was no time now to transfer on board the ship. A couple of barrels of powder, a broken carronade, and a heap of barrels and casks, mostly damaged and empty were all thrown in a heap on the top of the gunpowder barrels.

“I fancy when this little lot goes off,” said Captain George, quietly, “it will play havoc among the Yankees if they come on to the spit.”

“They won’t venture.”

“Yes, they will,” replied the Englishman ; “they are all troops fresh landed from the transports ; they haven’t smelt Confederate powder yet, nor had rebel bullets whistling among them. Wonder how they’ll like it ! There they come. See, they are halting—don’t know what to make of the bonfires. Wonder if they think we built them for them to warm themselves by ?”

“We’ll warm them presently ; wait till I get on board. They are in beautiful range of the carronades. We’ve got a dozen on board, and two Parrot guns. Let’s get to the ship. Come, ladies.”

Then leaving a guard of a dozen sailors, Stanton Glynne and Captain George embarked in one of the boats with Lola and Maude Glynne.

The latter was terribly frightened. The fierce uproar of battle had not yet commenced ; but she could see the foe deploying from the road in the full glare of the bonfires.

“Jerusalem !” said Captain George, with a grim

smile, "won't they catch it directly! Look at Hubert. I can just make him out behind the pine logs, going about among them. I know he's telling them to be patient, and not fire till the enemy have shown their whole force."

"Give way, men," cried Stanton to the sailors at the oars; "let's get on board, and be ready to open the ball."

"Under the bows—steer close under the bows of the vessel," cried Captain George.

"Why under the bows?" asked Stanton Glynne.

"We haven't named our craft yet," replied Captain George, producing a bottle of wine from under his cloak. "Miss Glynne, yours be the honour of naming this—the first rebel privateer."

"I will do so," said gentle Maude, her face lighting up with enthusiasm. "I was afraid just now; it has passed off. I feel, sir, that with the aid of gallant men like yourself, and the sympathy of the English nation, we may yet conquer an independence, although the odds are so terribly against us."

Captain George thanked her with an eloquent look.

Lola only sighed.

"The sympathy of the English nation!" she thought. "Ah! that they might indeed depend on, would they but consent to remove the one blot from their escutcheon—slavery. But they are too proud—these brave, haughty Southerners; and their pride will be their ruin. Slavery is the rock on which they will split. Alas! they cannot see it."

She said nothing however.

"What is to be the name of the vessel?" Maude Glynne asked.

Captain George leaned forward and whispered it in her ear.

But at that moment the voice of Hubert Glynne was heard, loud and clear, like a clarion.

"Now, boys, let them have it! Hurrah! for the Confederacy, and down with the Yankees. Fire!"

Almost with one accord sixty rifles and carbines sent the leaden messengers of death into the enemy's ranks.

A loud shout rent the air.

Maude screamed faintly, and hid her face in her hands.

"Courage, dear Miss Glynne—may I say dear Maude?" said Captain George in her ear. "Be brave; remember your brothers—your blazing homestead. Here is the bottle; name our vessel. I shall look on it as an omen of success."

"I will be brave," said Maude, collecting all her energies as she rose to her feet and grasped the bottle which Captain George proffered her.

The boat was now close under the bows of the steamer. The forecastle, forerigging, and even the bowsprit was crowded by the sailors, all in a state of wild excitement.

Captain George rose and shouted—

"Silence, men. This lady is about to give your ship its name."

Then Maude Glynne spoke in as loud a voice as she could—

"Success to this vessel! May she carry terror and destruction to the enemy's commerce, and at least in part avenge at sea the outrage and pillage of the Yankees on land."

Then she dashed the bottle against the ship's bows.

"I name her the 'FERRY CROSS,'"

CHAPTER II.

RUNNING THE GANTLET.

SUCH a shout went to heaven as Maude Glynne's words were heard and understood by the crew as could only emanate from the throats of half a hundred brawny seamen in a desperate state of excitement.

Almost at the same moment a fierce fire on either side commenced on shore, and the shouts of the sailors on board mingled with the rattle of musketry on shore, and the yells of the combatants on either side. For in the fury of battle men yell and scream rather than shout. The water around was soon splashed up in places by stray bullets, proving plainly enough that the enemy were advancing.

"Give way, men—round to the lee side!" shouted Captain George. "We must get the ladies in safety."

In a few moments the boat was alongside the larboard gangway, and Maude Glynne and Lola, amidst the cheers of the men, climbed up the ladder, and were conducted to the cabin of the rebel privateer, now named the Fiery Cross.

Meanwhile the battle waxed fiercer each moment on land. Stanton Glynne and Captain George lost not a moment in making preparations to aid their friends on shore.

"Over with the carronades to the starboard side, lads! Some of you train the pivot gun. *Every man to his station!*"

This was a timely order and needed, for the crew were in a state of wild excitement, running hither and thither, shouting, yelling, and cheering.

At such a time a judicious officer seeks to calm his men—not excite them. There are very few men who are not brave while the battle fury is on them, fewer still who are calm and collected.

These latter make the real heroes. Not the impulsive, dashing spirits who would rush with wild frenzy on certain death.

And now from the deck of the vessel there was a splendid view of the fight on shore. The first sharp volley took the Yankees by surprise. They had not expected so sudden and deadly a reception. In the full glare of the bonfire light they presented an excellent mark as they came out from among the pine-trees and deployed into line.

The report of the rifles of the defenders was answered by many a shriek and cry of pain as the bullets plunged with that peculiar dull thud, never to be forgotten when once heard, into the human flesh.

There was immediately a disorganized rush back into the pine wood, the wounded being left where they fell; but other companies coming up were deployed into line under shelter of the wood, and then a return fire was opened, which had it not been for the breast-work of logs, behind which the defenders crouched, loading and firing as fast as they could, the fire of the little band of Confederates would soon have been overpowered.

As it was the Yankee bullets fell so thick and fast, whistling and hissing about so as to make the air appear alive with these "wasps of war."

It was very soon obvious to the officer in command that it would not be possible to maintain the defence of the pine-log breastwork for any length of time against the overwhelming force of the enemy; for after the first and destructive volley, which caused their half-formed line to recoil in dismay, they spread out their men, and opened a close converging fire on the defenders. From the length of this line and the severity of the fire, Hubert Glynn calculated that there must be at least two strong regiments of the enemy, probably about sixteen hundred men in all. Then, attracted by the firing, they would soon receive reinforcements, and the taking of the rude fortification would be only a matter of time.

Under these circumstances he gave the order, "cease firing," and detailed two-thirds of his force to get on board the boats, which still plied between the vessel and

the shore, all that remained of the ammunition and arms, leaving only enough for a dozen rounds or so.

The enemy were now invisible, and on their part, too, the firing ceased. This, however, was by no means to be taken as an indication that they were beaten off. The number of the little force defending was certainly known accurately, or nearly so, by the foe, and in all probability preparations were now being made for a grand attack.

So Hubert Glynne made all preparations to receive the first rush of the enemy, and repulse him, and then at once take to the boats and seek safety on board the vessel.

Accordingly all the boats of the ship were brought close in to shore, with only just sufficient sailors in each to row back, thus leaving the greatest possible room for the land combatants.

At a given signal the pile of pine-wood was to be fired, and then, after beating back the first assault, the majority of the defenders were to take to the boats, while ten picked men remained to pour in a last discharge from the cannon, spike them, and then follow the example of their comrades, and seek safety on board the ship.

It by no means followed, however, that the fight would be thus ended. The vessel would be well manned; the Yankees, furious at being baffled, would line the beach, thinking the rebels had taken to flight, demoralized and panic-stricken. The fire from the carronades, the Parrot gun, the pivot, and the small arms might have the effect of undeceiving them.

.

And now they come on to the attack. It is ushered in by a tremendous volley of musketry, which leaves scarcely a log unsplintered by bullets, and wounds half a dozen of the defenders.

A few seconds after this volley a compact array of the Yankees comes out from the wood, and advances fast and steadily, their comrades behind keeping up meanwhile a heavy fire.

There is not room to advance against the breastwork

in full line, so they come on in columns of companies, steadily and without firing.

It is certain that the Northern officers have no notion the defenders have artillery, or they would not march their men on in such a reckless manner up to the jaws of cannon loaded with grape.

In a few minutes they were right abreast of the bon-fires, whose ruddy glare reveals even the features of the men. At this precise moment, when the advancing foe is within a hundred and fifty yards, the word is given to fire, and instantly the three small cannon are discharged simultaneously. The grape-shot whistles through the air, and great gaps are torn in the Yankee ranks. Then with wild yells, which drown the cries of the wounded, a terrible fire of rifles and carbines is opened from behind the breastwork, and the assailants having halted at the discharge of grape, fall back in confusion, leaving their dead and most of their wounded behind them.

The guns from the vessel now do good service also, and round shot ploughing up the ground and crashing through the trees accelerate the retreat of the Yankees.

The enemy having been thus twice beaten off, Hubert Glynn hastened to make the necessary preparations for their own departure. For it was no part of his plan to remain and obstinately to defend a position which must in the end be abandoned when there was an easy way of escape by means of the vessel.

So he ordered all to embark on board one of the boats, except enough to man the three small cannon, in order to fire the enemy a last salute if he came on before the embarkation was completed.

That he intended to do so was soon apparent. A fire was opened against the breastwork from two howitzers which had been brought up, and Hubert Glynn could see the Yankees being massed together for another and desperate assault.

There was another circumstance, too, which gave Hubert considerable uneasiness.

About a mile lower down there was a very narrow point in the channel, and he could discern a number of

men dragging a gun along the beach, assisted by a couple of horses. The deep sand made their progress necessarily slow, but it seemed probable that they would traverse the distance before all could be embarked, and the vessel got under way.

He could make out a party in advance of those with the gun, busy at work throwing up a light defence of sand and logs behind which to mount it.

Now probably the armament of the vessel could, as they passed this place, overpower the fire from the enemy's solitary gun. But there was the danger of one unlucky shot striking her below the water-line, when of course she would be at their mercy. It was certain, from the promptitude with which they now acted, that no effort would be spared to capture the intended privateer and those who hoped to make their escape in her.

Before deciding to abandon the place at once, without taking on board the cannon, which would be a work of some time and labour, Hubert Glynn examined the now rapidly rising fort down the channel through a small field-glass.

What he saw convinced him there was not a moment to be lost. He had not before observed that there was already one gun mounted.

It was now nearly broad daylight, and in a short time the sun would rise and probably dissipate the mists which hung about the swampy land and even the water in irregular patches.

The gun he thought was a heavy one ; quite heavy enough to sink the little Fiery Cross if the shot should unhappily hull her under water.

Under these circumstances he resolved to abandon the guns, and at once take to the boats which awaited them at the end of the spit of land.

"Give them one more volley, lads," he shouted, "then spike the guns and fall back."

This order was quickly obeyed, and in a minute's time he saw the remainder of his force safe in the boats, the guns having been spiked and overturned. Waiting only to set fire to the wood pile, on the top of which were the

powder barrels, he also embarked on board one of the boats, and gave the word to shove off.

Easier said than done. The tide was falling, and while the boat had been waiting she had grounded on the sand.

The situation was critical, for the enemy, now that it was daylight, could see them, and had observed this rapid retreat to the boats.

Cheered on by their officers, the Yankees came running up to the now evacuated defence, shouting and yelling like demons.

"Jump out of the boat," shouted Captain George, loudly, from the deck of the vessel. "Jump out every man. That will lighten her, and you can shove her off."

This advice came not a moment too soon, for the enemy had now swarmed over the defence, and while some were busily employed in again mounting the overthrown guns, others advanced along the spit of land, firing as they came.

By doing as Captain George had directed, the boats were safely got off, and in a short time all hands had scrambled in again, and were being rowed towards the ship; not, however, before several had been wounded by the bullets of the enemy.

The water was now plashed in all directions as the Yankee fire increased; several oars were broken, and the boat lit in several places.

It may be believed that the occupants of the two boats were not sorry as they passed round the stern of the vessel, and so found shelter.

Meanwhile, the *Fiery Cross*, under the command of Stanton Glynne, swung round with the tide and wind, head out to sea. The hawser by which her head was moored to the land had been cast off, and she was now held by the one at the stern only.

This was so far fortunate for the Yankees, who now swarmed along the sandy spit of land, for her broadside could not be brought to bear.

No sooner were the boats alongside and the men on board, than Stanton Glynne gave the word—

"Cast off the hawser—go ahead easy with the engines—hard aport the helm."

These orders were obeyed simultaneously. The engines groaned, the vessel went round, and away glided the Fiery Cross, amidst a volley of musketry from the enemy.

In obedience to her helm, however, her head came slowly round, and her starboard broadside was presented to the promontory. The carronades had been all hauled over to that side in expectation of this, and now came the moment for punishing the Yankees for their temerity.

"Fire!"

One after another the guns, heavily loaded with grape, belched forth their contents, and the effect at such short range was disastrous to the Federal troops, who, in defiance of all discipline, were scattered all over the place, firing and shouting as it pleased them—a disorganized mob.

The close discharge of grape was most disastrous, and there was instantly a stampede back to the mainland. To complete their discomfiture, the powder barrels on the top of the blazing wood-pile now exploded, scattering burning logs and fragments in all directions.

At least a hundred were killed and wounded by this discharge conjoined with the explosion.

Their dead, dying, and maimed lay all over the sandy spit, which was soon ensanguined by their gore.

"One more lesson for these cursed Yankees," said Hubert Glynne, savagely surveying the scene, "one more of the many we will teach them when they dare meet us in open fight."

"One more victory, I grant, though on a small scale; but, do you not think of the disasters in store for you and your cause?"

"You here, Lola? You should be below, in safety—this is no place for you."

"Run up the ensign," cried Stanton Glynne, "and then, lads, three cheers for the rebel privateer, the Fiery Cross!"

"A good omen, this first victory, of our gallant vessel's future career," cried Hubert Glynne.

And as the white flag with the blue starry cross rose to the peak, he took off his hat, and waving it, shouted—

“Hurrah! for the Confederacy! Hurrah! for the Fiery Cross!”

Then again there rang out a thundering cheer of triumph and victory.

Lola gazed sadly at the Confederate ensign fluttering so gaily in the breeze.

“Ah, Hubert,” she said, “you cheer now and are full of enthusiasm as your flag flutters gaily aloft. The day will come when, with bitter grief and humiliation, you will see it hauled down, to be replaced by the hated and despised stars and stripes.”

“Never!” cried Hubert Glynne, hotly, “while there are brave hearts and stalwart arms in the South to keep it unfurled.”

“We shall see. You and I will both live to witness this Confederacy of yours prostrate in the dust.”

“You speak as an enemy, Lola.”

“Not so. Again and again have I told you the rock on which you will split; that rock is *slavery*. Abolish that, you take away from the North her most deadly weapon and plausible excuse; abolish slavery, and your one time slaves will flock around your banners and do battle under the leadership of their old masters against the invaders.”

“It cannot be, Lola. The institution was handed down to us by our fathers, and we must uphold it.”

“And in upholding that, you will cause the downfall of all this grand edifice you call the Confederate States of America, and, as a just punishment for your own folly and shortsightedness, you will feel the conqueror’s heel on your neck.”

“We will do all that man can do. The issue will rest with heaven.”

“And heaven will decide against you.”

She said this solemnly and earnestly, and then descended into the cabin to Maude Glynne.

CHAPTER III.

ESCAPE OF THE FIERY CROSS.

THE daring rebel vessel had now made a good offing out in the lake, and was steaming down towards the narrow part of the channel.

Hubert pointed out to his brother and Captain George the battery of two guns which the enemy had now completed. It was a most formidable obstacle to pass. The danger was great, and a brief council was held as to what should be done. Soundings were taken, and five fathoms of water found. The steamer drew about thirteen feet, or a trifle over two fathoms.

"We must hug the opposite shore, so as to keep as far as possible from those dangerous guns," Captain George observed.

"Dangerous, indeed; one shot below the water-line would put an abrupt end to the career of the *Fiery Cross*. But as to hugging the shore, it is very dangerous also. The water shoals rapidly, and there are heaps of sand-banks about."

"Of two evils, choose the least," Hubert said. "It would be madness to pass close to those guns."

"If you will take the helm," said Captain George to Stanton Glynne, "I will go in the chains with the hand-lead, and sound as we go on."

"That is about the best thing to be done."

"Half speed, I suppose?"

"Yes; we daren't go ahead in such a ticklish channel under a full head of steam."

Stanton Glynne took the helm, and the Englishman went into the main-chains on the port side with the hand-lead.

The vessel's course was altered slightly so as to take her over to the opposite shore, away from the Yankee battery.

The water shoaled rapidly from five fathoms to three ; then a trifle under three ; and finally to two and a half fathoms. The vessel had then only two feet of water between her keel and the bottom—close shaving, certainly.

The morning was grey, cold, and misty ; but not sufficiently so to prevent the enemy having a full view of the audacious little steamer as she slowly steamed ahead. Just before she got right opposite the battery, they opened fire on her.

The first shot plunged into the sea about fifty yards ahead of her, and by the great column of water it sent up into the air, they knew it was a rather heavy gun which had propelled it.

It seemed that they had very accurately got her range as far as distance was concerned. It was highly desirable to edge over even farther towards the opposite shore if possible. Whilst they were deliberating as to the safety of this, another shot struck the water close under her bows, actually throwing spray on to the forecastle.

"It must be done at all hazards," said Stanton Glynne ; "the tide, I think, is beginning to rise. It must have taken a turn. Soundings, sir ?" he cried to Captain George.

"Two fathoms and a half."

"She'll bear another fifty yards, I think," said the young commander ; and then making the wheel revolve a few spokes, the little vessel crept yet closer to the low sandy shore.

In a few seconds there came two more shots. These were in a direct line with the steamer, but some thirty or forty yards short. The heavy cannon-ball plunged into the water, and then ricochetting, went soaring over head, absolutely passing between her masts.

"Ah !" said Stanton Glynne to Hubert, who stood by his side, with a deep sigh of relief, "that was a narrow escape—touch and go. They've got some good artillerists there, confound them !"

The next shot struck the water still nearer, but again it ricocheted, and went soaring by over head.

It was nervous work now—the situation one of extreme peril.

Should a shot strike the hull low down, the vessel must perforce become a total wreck.

Scarcely had the last shot passed harmlessly over, than Captain George shouted from the main chains—

“Port your helm, hard a-port; there’s only two fathoms of water—her keel must be dragging in the sand.”

Round spun the wheel, and the ship’s head forged away a little from the land.

Then there was felt by all on board a grinding and a tremulous motion.

Another moment and with a slight shock she came to a dead stand still, then she forged ahead a few yards slowly and with difficulty, and then she settled obstinately down upon the sand.

“Reverse the engines, hard astern,” shouted Stanton Glynne, turning to the engine-room hatch.

This was done, but she remained immovable.

“It’s all over, I fear,” Captain George said, coming out of the chains, where he could be of no further use.

“They can pot at us now at their leisure.”

“She might float off with the tide when it rises.”

“It is rising now, but very slowly,” said Lieutenant Wharncliffe; “too slowly to be of any service to us. Before there’s water enough to float her, she’ll have half a dozen big holes in her hull; that is, if those fellows know what they are about.”

As if to prove that they did know what they were about, at this very moment a round shot crashed through her bulwarks forward, and passed out the other side. Though no one was hit by the cannon-ball, four men were wounded by the splinters.

“Man the starboard guns,” shouted the young commander. “You, sir,” to Captain George, “see to the pivot gun and the Parrot. If we must stick here as a target, we’ll give them pepper meanwhile.”

A brisk cannonade was now commenced on the part of the stranded vessel, and kept up briskly till she was shrouded in smoke, and the guns so hot as to necessitate waiting awhile for them to cool.

The *Fiery Cross* had been hulled several times, and a dozen men were wounded and two killed.

A few minutes afterwards the enemy also ceased firing. "Ah! they are only waiting for the smoke to clear off," said Hubert Glynne, gloomily. "They'll blaze away at us again directly."

But the smoke still hung about the vessel like a pall, concealing the enemy from their view and them from the enemy. Hitherto it had been a dead calm, but now a moderate breeze arose.

All was now despondency. By reason of the distance the fire from the carronades had done little or no damage. The Parrot gun had given way at the muzzle almost at the first discharge, and the carriage of the pivot was broken by an unlucky shot.

Captain George went into the chains, and took a cast of the lead.

"The water's rising fast," he cried; "there's two foot more than there was. She'll float in another quarter hour."

"Too late," said Stanton Glynne, gloomily.

Captain George came on the quarter-deck, and gazed around in some surprise.

The enemy did not open fire.

The vessel was still shrouded in smoke, although there was a brisk breeze blowing now.

"By Jove! I can't make this out. Thunder and lightning! it isn't smoke, it's mist. We are in a dense mist, they can't see us. If it lasts another ten minutes, we may yet save the ship."

His words produced a wondrous effect. All was excitement and hurry.

A lot of timber and some of the wood piled forward was thrown overboard so as to lighten her. At the same time the engine was set going backwards. After about five minutes a cry broke from Hubert Glynne—

"She moves!"

"She moves," was echoed fore and aft, and in ten minutes more she glided slowly off the shoal, and floated once more, uninjured, except in her upper works, by the fire of the enemy.

A cheer was with difficulty repressed, and the word was passed along for silence. Their object was to steam past the dangerous guns under cover of the mist.

Captain George again took his place in the chains; Stanton Glynne at the helm.

Just then the enemy opened fire again, but evidently at random, for though all watched and listened, there was no sign of the shot. It went wide, as did another and another. Meanwhile the *Fiery Cross* was steered cautiously into deeper water, and when in three fathoms proceeded at half speed, groping her way along the channel, as it were, by means of the lead.

It was full a quarter hour ere the mist was driven off by the wind, and when it cleared away, the baffled Yankees had the mortification of seeing what they supposed to be the hopeless stranded vessel steaming merrily down into Lake Borgue, on her way to the open sea.

They were almost out of range, and when shot after shot falling short proved that they were quite so, a deafening cheer broke from the crew of the rebel privateer.

The flag was dipped in insolent mockery, and away she sped out to sea.

Thus escaped a vessel destined to be a scourge of the ocean and the terror of the Yankee merchantmen.

CHAPTER IV.

HOW THE OLD UNIONIST WAS TRICKED.

A BRIGHT look-out was kept, and the flag hauled down, for it was no part of their plan to invite attack by any Yankee gunboat or war-steamer; for, be it observed, this little vessel was by no means built for fighting; she was too weak in her timbers, and her machinery was all exposed. Of course, if compelled to it, they would fight her, but resolved to avoid an unequal conflict, if possible; at all events, until she had been strengthened, and a heavier armament placed on board.

Some distance up the coast, and about twenty miles from the entrance to Mobile Bay, there is a little inlet called Pelican Creek. Here there were a party of friends waiting for the arrival of the little vessel, with a heavy 8-inch shell gun, and two more 24-pound howitzers, weighing 13 cwt. each.

The 8-inch shell gun was to be mounted as a pivot between the fore and main-masts, in place of the miserable one which had given way at the first mishap.

The main-deck would have to be considerably strengthened to carry the heavy gun; but this, it was calculated, would not take long, as all the materials were on board.

There were some coal bunkers to be built, and a magazine and shell-room below the water-line. This done, the Fiery Cross would be ready for service. Early in the afternoon the vessel steamed into Pelican Creek without having been observed by any of the enemy's cruisers, several of which were blockading the harbour of Mobile.

Here it was decided Lola and Maude should leave. Maude would go to Mobile, where she and her brother had friends; Lola, too, would go to Mobile, in the first place, but as to her ulterior destination she said she had not made up her mind.

The parting between Maude and her brothers was a sorrowful one. In spite of all they could say to console her, she wept bitterly. They were going on a desperate expedition, and it was but too likely she would never see either of them again.

That between Lola and Hubert Glynne was of an embarrassing nature. The girl had saved his life, and well he knew the esteem—nay, the deep affection, she had for him.

However, this was no time for dilly-dallying and idle love-making. Action was the order of the day; and though but just escaped from the jaws of death, Hubert was again prepared to risk all for the cause.

Already he had been twice wounded and twice made prisoner—on the last occasion sentenced to death.

“Lola, farewell. I trust we shall meet in happier times.”

She was too deeply affected to speak, but, taking his hand, bent over it and kissed it. Her tears fell on it; and then, afraid to trust herself further, she turned away and made all haste to the boat, where Maude Glynne was already awaiting her.

And now, having disposed of the ladies for a time, we will devote our attention to the Fiery Cross, and give the brothers Stanton and Hubert an opportunity of relating, briefly, the circumstances which caused them to meet on the shores of Lake Pontchartrain.

Pelican Creek was admirably adapted for the purposes of the rebel privateer. The entrance was narrow, and across it there ran a bar which would effectually prevent any vessel drawing over fourteen feet of water from entering.

Thus the little vessel was safe from molestation from all the enemy's larger ships and even gunboats.

The navigation within was intricate and difficult, though safe enough with a pilot who was well acquainted therewith. One of the crew of the vessel had been brought up on the shores of the creek, so that was all right.

Though there were numberless shallows and sand-

banks, the water in shore was deep enough for the ship to lie close in under a sand battery which had been erected, and on which were mounted four guns of moderate calibre.

Thus there was every convenience for shipping the heavy 8-inch shell gun, and strengthening the main-deck, in order to mount it.

There was yet one other thing for which the vessel must wait, and that was for the requisite authority from the Confederate Government for the vessel to sail as a regularly commissioned vessel of war on a privateering cruise.

This should have been at Pelican Creek by the time the steamer got there, but, though hourly expected, it had not yet arrived. The delay was in some sort advantageous, for it gave time to thoroughly overhaul the ship, and also discipline the crew, and assign to each his proper rank and duty,

Of this more anon.

We will devote a short space to a mutual relation by the brothers Glynne of the circumstances which brought about their meeting.

Stanton Glynne spoke first.

"It is now more than a year since I threw up my commission in the United States navy. Many friends urged me strongly against the step, and even after I had taken it begged me once more to serve under the old flag. But I could not take arms against my native state. For a long time I was racked with doubt, and knew not which way to turn. Remember, that I have been all the while till lately in New York and Boston, the very strongholds of the Unionists.

"Your letters reproaching me for my inaction, and others from friends in the South urging me to cast in my lot with them and serve under the banner of the Confederacy, were by no means without effect. But I was at a loss what to do. I was closely watched as a known Southerner, and knew not how to get South. Then I had been brought up to the naval service, and as yet the Confederacy had no navy. What was to be done? Vainly and long I pondered over this matter, till at last I

hit on a solution of the difficulty. I discovered a means of communicating with the Southern Government, wrote to the Secretary of State for the Navy, and submitted to him a certain proposal and plan. The proposal was, at my own expense to put to sea with a small fast steamer, as well manned and armed as I could manage, and then place her at the disposal of the government; the said government to provide guns, ammunition, and more men, to be at a stated rendezvous where I could bring the vessel, if I succeeded in escaping the Federal cruisers. Furthermore, I was to receive my commission as captain in command, and have the privilege of nominating my officers, subject to the approval of the government. It was, of course, an impossibility for me to arm the vessel in Boston harbour, take ammunition on board, or even ship an unusually large crew. Any of these things would have excited immediate suspicion, and been fatal to my plan. These terms were accepted, and I was informed, about four months back, that if I could bring a fast steam vessel into this creek, and place her at the service of the Confederate government, an armament would be provided, also ammunition and a crew, and I should be duly commissioned as captain commanding.

"Now for my plan.

"You know, I have seen a great deal of the Vandaleurs—been very intimate with them, in fact."

"Yes, I do know," said Hubert. "People said down South that while your friends and brothers were fighting the battles of their country, you were dangling at the apron-strings of Miss Vandaleur."

"Then people lied," said Stanton, hotly, "I could not help myself, and any feeling I might have for Miss Vandaleur did not influence me in what I have done."

"I believe you, brother," said Hubert, frankly. "I only told you what people said."

Stanton Glynn went on—

"Old Vandaleur, the shipowner, was continually taunting me with my idleness, and urging me to re-enter the service of the United States. I told him again and again that it was out of the question; and that the stars and stripes should never float over my head again, if I

could help it. Then he went on to abuse me yet more violently—you know what a cantankerous old dog he is—for my lazy, useless, worthless life. There was some truth in what he said, but I could not help it. It was my misfortune to be in the North when the war broke out. He was that insulting that I swear to you, Hubert, I would not have put up with it but for the sake of Miss Vandaleur, for whom I will own I have a great partiality. His last words were, on this particular occasion, ‘Since you are wanting in patriotism or courage, and desert the service you have been brought up to in the hour of your country’s need, why do you not at least show that you are not lazy?—why don’t you go to sea in a merchantman? I’ll give you a berth in one of mine, if it’s only to get rid of you.’

“I thought nothing of the words at the time, and left him in great indignation; but shortly a brilliant idea struck me.

“I had, as you know, nearly twenty thousand dollars. I could, I thought, borrow as much more. Anyhow, I calculated on thirty-five thousand dollars. Now with fifty thousand dollars I could purchase and equip a good-sized steamer, and provide her with a sufficient crew for a merchantman. I might have got a smaller steamer for less, but such a one would not have suited my purpose. So I went to work. First I made up my pile to thirty-five thousand dollars by borrowing of friends, selling some bits of property, and so on. Then away I went to Canada, where I knew there were a lot of hot Secessionists, like myself, compelled to voluntary inaction. I soon got two or three to join me. There’s Wharnccliffe here, my second lieutenant, who came down with six thousand dollars; then there are three other young fellows who came with me in this expedition, and are willing to serve as simple midshipmen; they found five thousand dollars a piece; so altogether I had considerably over the fifty thousand dollars I required. Of course, I told them all about my plan. They approved of it, and eagerly entered into it with me. Away we started back for Boston. Fortune favoured us, old Vandaleur had that very week one of his vessels come back from the Medi-

terreanean—a fast screw steamer—the very one we are now on board of. She was called the Juno then. Well, he let drop that he wanted to get rid of her. I asked him, carelessly, what was the price; he said forty thousand dollars as she stood. I went on board her, looked over her, had a talk with the engineer and the officers as to her speed, and found that with a little alteration and some repairs she would suit admirably.

“Then I went back to old Vandaleur, and said that on consideration I had determined to take his advice. I could not serve in U.S. navy against my native state, but I would have a cruise in a merchantman for a year or so, by which time I hoped the war would be over. I was going to buy a vessel, I said, and command her myself: would he sell me one? What trade did I want her for, was his next question. I said for the Mediterranean trade. Then he mentioned the Juno. But suppose I could not manage the money? I asked him how much. He said the same as before—forty thousand dollars. I said I would get the money, and, to his great astonishment, handed him notes to the amount of a thousand dollars to bind the bargain. He was taken aback, but could not refuse the dollars. So I got a memorandum from him, and at once went to work looking up a crew and so forth. I engaged the engineer who was already on board of her—a Southerner by birth, and about a dozen of the crew and firemen on whom I could depend. But at the last moment everything was nearly knocked on the head. Enoch Vandaleur, somehow or other, grew suspicious. I fancy he got wind of my true designs. Anyhow, he refused to complete the bargain, and said he was willing to hand me back my twenty thousand dollars. This was after I had spent a good deal more, to say nothing of time and trouble—you may guess I was angry just a few. I was determined not to be done, however.

“Fortunately, the steamer had sufficient coal on board for a week’s consumption, her engines were in good order, and, if necessary, she was ready to start at a moment’s notice. I talked it over with my friends, and also took the engineer into my confidence. Then I made a bold

stroke for it. She was laying out in the bay. I went on board, mauaged, with Wharncliffe and the rest, to get all those of the crew who were not in the secret ashore, and at night got steam up quietly, slipped the cable and ran out to sea.

"Previously, however, I enclosed the other twenty thousand dollars and a letter in an envelope, and sent it by a trusty friend to Enoch."

"Capital, capital, by thunder! Would not the old fellow tear his hair? But what did you say in the letter?"

"Merely this—that as he refused to complete his bargain, I took the liberty of doing so for him. I was going on a pleasure trip down south, I added, and doubtless he would hear of me ere long."

Hubert Glynnne laughed heartily, and seemed thoroughly to enjoy the fun of the Boston shipowner being thus outwitted.

"Well then," Stanton went on, "we got her safe out to sea, and the next thing was to bring her safely to the rendezvous. That was no easy thing, I can tell you; we had a succession of heavy southernly gales, and were knocked about in the Atlantic for pretty nearly a fortnight. Then we fell in with a U.S. war steamer, and were chased, having a very narrow escape, by reason of the bursting of one of the steam pipes.

"However, we got safe down here to this creek at last, successfully eluding the notice of the blockading squadron off Mobile. On our arrival here we heard of the fall of New Orleans, and shortly afterwards of your arrest and sentence. Some of the ammunition and armament had been sent, but neither of the big guns were of a kind fitted for the vessel. However, I took them on board, and being well informed of what was going on in New Orleans, started for Lake Pontchartrain, trusting that the attempt to procure your escape would be successful. It has been so, and in addition to yourself, I receive sixty or seventy volunteers from friends, who, thinking the cause hopeless for the present in New Orleans, are inclined, many of them, to cast in their lot with me for a cruise in the rebel privateer.

“And now, Hubert, it is your turn to inform me, briefly as you please, what has happened lately down in these parts, and explain all about this Fiery Cross society I hear so much of. I have ~~seen~~ no one till yesterday able to explain the matter to me, and this is the first opportunity.”

CHAPTER V.

HUBERT GLYNNE'S NARRATIVE.

"It shall be short and sweet, I promise you, Stanton. The adventures that have befallen me I can assure you have been more varied and startling than yours."

"Ah! but, brother, mine are yet to come. Wait till I get to sea with this little craft. If I don't make the Yankees see snakes, my name isn't Stanton Glynne."

"Some months ago, a party of friends were at our house, which the Yankees have now pillaged and burned down. May heaven confound them! We had no suspicion of any danger. All at once this girl, Lola, came into the room, and, pale as death, put in my hands a letter, which at first she declared was given her by an unknown man, who left instantly. Since, however, I am well assured that she wrote it herself. This letter was to the purport that on that very night there was to be a negro revolt, and that if ~~the~~ warning were neglected, murder, rapine, and all sorts or crimes would be perpetrated by the niggers.

"The signal for the assembling of the insurgents was to be a cross of fire, which should blaze forth on Gum-tree Hill. At first I was disposed to pay little heed to this warning, although I was well aware how trustworthy and devoted to us the girl Lola was, and despite her earnest manner and agitation. However, at the very hour she predicted, midnight, such a beacon did blaze forth on the night. Then I knew that the warning was not one to be neglected. Fortunate it was that I had a company of brave fellows, mostly with their horses. We mounted and rode off at once to the rendezvous of the insurgent slaves. On the road we were attracted by a woman's shrieks, and riding up, found Lola in the hands of a dozen or so of the black fiends. It appears that they had, by some means or another, discovered the fact

that she had given us warning, and were about to fasten her to a rude cross, smeared all over with tar and turpentine, and then set light to it."

"Horrible!"

"Horrible, indeed. Well, we rescued her from this terrible fate, and then leaving her in safety among the branches of a low tree, away we rode to Gumtree Hill. We caught the wretches in a rude entrenchment, singing, shouting, and making merry over their intended saturnalia of bloodshed. Their entrenchment did not protect them, for we charged right over it, and paid them in their own coin, cutting and slashing right and left. There were not many of the half drunken men who escaped unwounded, I can tell you. Well, then, we rode back, scouring the bush in every direction. As I rode up to the tree where I had left the girl Lola, I was fired at by an assassin in ambush, who fortunately missed me, through Lola deranging his aim by herself firing at him with the pistol I had left her. It turned out afterwards that it was her own brother, that untameable young scoundrel Sebastian, with whom we had always so much trouble."

"By Jove! I hope you caught him and hung him."

"No," said Hubert, gravely; "he was caught, it is true, but I pardoned him."

"Pardoned him, after attempting to murder you! I call that mercy gone mad."

"Yes, for his sister's sake; but listen, Stanton, and don't interrupt me. When we returned home, fresh horrors awaited us. Maude was found stabbed in the breast: the knife, a terrible one, still in the wound. It was Sebastian's knife."

"And he was the attempted murderer both of yourself and Maude?"

"No, no; I tell you not to interrupt me. It was impossible he could have done both. Lola, when she fired at him to save my life, wounded him, broke his arm; the surgeon afterwards extracted the bullet, and I recognised it as one of mine, cast in a special mould; it was in the pistol I gave to Lola to defend herself with when I left her in the tree. Having proved by a clear *alibi* that he

could not have been guilty of the second crime, I pardoned him for his sister's sake. Since then he has done good service to me. At the time I pardoned him, as he stood with the rope round his neck, he swore that he would never more attempt to injure me or mine, and I believed him. You know Varley Fang?"

"Yes; I never liked him."

"As great a scoundrel as ever walked the earth. It seems, attracted by her great beauty, he has long had designs on Lola. He offered to buy her from me—of course I refused, indignantly. Shortly after this I had to join the army of Tennessee, for I had raised a regiment, and went at the head of it myself to the battle ground. At that time there seemed no immediate prospect of a fight in Mississippi. We little thought that the Yankees would ever gain possession of New Orleans. I went to Tennessee—was just in time to take part in the battle of Shiloh—another glorious Southern victory—where I was wounded, and taken prisoner to Washington. After a time I was exchanged, and made the best of my way south again. Startling events had occurred during my absence; Lola had been forcibly kidnapped by Varley Fang, and carried off to his house up the river. She was rescued by a lot of my friends—Captain George among them—all members of the fraternity of the Fiery Cross."

"By the way, Hubert, you have never initiated me into the secrets of that mysterious order, about which I have heard a great deal."

"Nor is it necessary I should do so at present. Let it suffice that it is an order—a secret association—the members of which bind themselves down by oath to obey the behests of the superior officers and the mandates of the grand council. Varley Fang became a member for traitorous purposes, and his life is forfeit. If he is not already dead, he is condemned to death, and should he fall into my hands I am bound to kill him as a traitor and a spy. But to get on with my narrative. I arrived in New Orleans just at the critical time when the Yankee fleet passed the forts. This was accomplished by treachery, and I have reason to believe that Varley Fang was at the bottom thereof. I was attacked by fever

brought on by the pain of my wound on my road back, and was really scarcely in my right senses when I got back to New Orleans. I remember saving Lola's brother Sebastian from being hanged; then I had an interview with Lola; and then I rode off in a half delirious state. This was in New Orleans, just before the fall of the city. I remember also falling in with Varley Fang, who was on horseback, like myself. I gave chase to him, for I had heard of all his villany; he managed to escape, however. Then I grew quite delirious, but somehow or another contrived to make my way to the old house. There were some decrepit negroes and negresses there; they took care of their master, and I recovered slightly from the fever. No sooner was I conscious than I insisted on mounting my horse and riding away to New Orleans, for I knew that Maude was there and Lola, neither knowing what had become of me. The fever was of an intermittent nature, and the heat of the sun, or some other cause, induced another fierce attack. During the time I had lain unconscious or delirious, the city had fallen into the hands of the Yankees. I knew nothing of this. I rode into New Orleans, giddy, feverish—scarce knowing what I was about. I saw the Yankee flag—the hated stars and stripes—on a flagstaff. I dismounted, tore it down, and trampled it beneath my feet.

“I was immediately surrounded by the Yankee troops, and though I resisted as well as I was able, was cut down and made prisoner. Then I was condemned to be executed by hanging. Lola, Maude, and other friends made unceasing efforts to procure a pardon or respite, or at any rate a reprieve.

“All in vain; and the night preceding the morning fixed for my execution had arrived. A plan of escape had been concocted, but it failed, by reason of the regiment on guard over my prison being changed for a negro one.

“On this last night, singular to say, Sebastian, Lola's brother, whose life I had twice saved, was on duty as sentry. It was impossible for him to compass my escape even had he so wished, but I begged one last favour of him, and he granted it. That was to shoot me on the

pretence that I was endeavouring to escape, and thereby save me from an ignominious death by hanging. I arranged with him that at the hour of midnight I would appear at the window of my cell, lantern in hand, and shake the bars as though trying to burst them down. At the last stroke of the clock he was to shoot me through the heart. I knew he was a deadly shot, and could do it.

"Now comes the most marvellous part of the story. Lola, my good angel, again appears on the scene. At half-past eleven, or thereabouts, she visited me by special order from General Butler. How she obtained that order I scarcely know, but I do know that that spawn of hell, Varley Fang, tried to induce Maude to sell Lola to him as the price of my life. I doubt not that I should have died all the same, and that this was but another piece of treachery. At all events he failed, and I was prepared to die at midnight by a bullet from Sebastian's rifle.

"Lola wept and prayed; but I need not go into the particulars of this, which I considered would be our last interview on earth. A few minutes before twelve another visitor was announced, of course also by special order from General Butler, no other than Varley Fang. I had told Lola that to save me from being hanged the sentry had promised to shoot me at the last stroke of midnight.

"When Varley Fang entered my cell—to triumph over me, I suppose—Lola fired up, called him 'scoundrel,' 'thief,' 'murderer,' 'assassin.'

"He laughed at her. Then her woman's wit came to her aid. She beguiled Varley Fang to the window of the cell; told him that I had friends without, that the prison bars were sawn through. This was as the clock chimed. He took the lantern, went to the window, examined the bars, and stood there as the last chime sounded. Sebastian fired. He fell, shot through the chest.

"She took the keys from him. I put on his hat and cloak, and we passed out of the prison unchallenged. In an hour's time I was by the shore of Lake Pontchartrain. That is all I have to tell."

"A wonderful escape indeed," said Stanton Glynne, drawing a deep breath. "Not half a bad girl that Lola; by Jove! it's a pity she isn't a white woman."

Hubert Glynne coloured up.

"You must not speak of her like that, Stanton. She is a free woman now, and a white woman. I scarcely believe that she has a drop of black blood in her veins."

"Well, at all events, Hubert, she was a slave—our slave."

"And none the less a noble-hearted brave, devoted girl—as good as she is beautiful. Would to God she had never been a slave!"

"Why, Hubert, old fellow," said Stanton, laughing, "I do believe you are sweet on the girl."

Hubert said nothing; but evidently greatly annoyed, rose, and walked away.

Stanton Glynne had a full share of southern slaveholding pride, and regarded those unhappy ones born to perpetual servitude, not unkindly, but with pitying contempt. They were not only another race, but in his opinion, and that of most Southerners, an inferior species.

And now that the brothers have related to each other the salient points of their adventures of late, we will go on with our narrative, and follow, for a time, the career of the rebel cruiser, the *Fiery Cross*.

CHAPTER VI.

PREPARATIONS FOR THE CRUISE.

IN three days from the date of the events narrated in the last chapter, the privateer steamer was ready to put to sea.

One 8-inch shell gun, and one 10-inch had been furnished by government; also a sufficient supply of ammunition, and the necessary authority to give the vessel the legitimate status of a Confederate ship of war, and the officers their commissions.

And now a few words as to the vessel, the little Fiery Cross, about to start on a cruise of devastation.

The Fiery Cross was a steamer, barque rigged, with sharp bows, but good beam, two aft mid masts, not too lofty so as to be top-heavy, but carrying very broad yards. She was painted black, and was flush fore and aft. At the present time her crew was as follows:—Captain Stanton Glynne in command; first lieutenant, Captain George; second lieutenant, John Wharnccliffe; third, Edward Mason; fourth, Walter Seagrave; captain of marines, Hubert Glynne; surgeon, Robert McDonald. Then there were four midshipmen, and thirty-six supernumerary midshipmen (those of the friends of Hubert Glynne, who volunteered for the cruise, not being nautical men, were allowed that honorary rank), four engineers, boatswain, two boatswain's mates, gunner, sail maker, carpenter, and two carpenter's mates, twenty marines, and seventy able seamen—a hundred and forty-nine in all.

Captain Stanton Glynne, having duly received his commission, mustered all hands and read it aloud.

Then the articles of war, nearly the same as those of the British service, were read, and next, a series of special orders drawn up by the captain himself.

Orders to be observed on board the C.S. Steamer Fiery Cross.

1. The deck will never be left without a lieutenant, except that in port a midshipman may be assigned to keep the first lieutenant's watch.

2. The quarter-deck will at all times be regarded as a place of parade, and no sitting or lounging will be permitted thereon. For the purposes of this order, all the spar-deck abaft the mainmast will be regarded as the quarter-deck.

3. Officers will wear their uniform at all times, when on board ship, and when on shore or duty.

3. No officer will remain out of the ship after ten p.m., without the especial permission of the commander.

5. Each division of guns will be exercised at least three times a week; and there will be an exercise at general quarters twice a week—on Tuesday and Friday.

6. The crew will be mustered at quarters for inspection every morning at nine o'clock (except Sundays), and every evening at sunset.

7. On Sundays there will be a general muster for inspection at eleven a.m., when the officers will appear in undress uniform, with epaulettes.

8. The chief engineer is to keep the captain informed at all times (through the first lieutenant) of the condition of his engines, boilers, &c.; and he is to see that his assistants are punctual and zealous in the performance of their duties; and report such as fail therein to the first lieutenant.

9. There will be an engineer at all times on watch in the engine-room when the ship is under steam, and the engineer on watch will report every two hours to the officer of the deck how the engines are working, &c.

10. The marine officer will drill his guard once every day when the weather is suitable and the duty of the ship does not interfere therewith.

11. The firemen will be exercised once a week, when the pumps, hoses, &c., are to be adjusted and used as in case of actual fire.*

* These are the exact orders issued by Captain Semmes before starting on his first cruise in the first vessel the Confederates sent to sea—the celebrated *Sumter*.

The Rebel Privateer.

CHAPTER VII.

THE START AND THE CHASE.

EVERYTHING being in readiness on board the *Fiery Cross*, it only remained to get to sea.

It appeared as though the enemy had some inkling of what was going on, for the launch which was sent out every day to reconnoitre, reported that a large Yankee steamer and a gunboat were in the offing.

Still, considering the great speed of the little vessel, her commander and officers had no doubt of being able to run the gauntlet safely.

On the following morning, the officer sent in the boat to reconnoitre, reported that the large man-of-war was no longer in sight, having, however, been replaced by a paddle-wheel steamer, with every appearance of great speed in smooth water.

From the manœuvres of this vessel and the gunboat, which cruised to and fro just without the bar, it seemed but too certain that the lurking place of the rebel steamer was known.

This was vexatious. The deck had been strengthened, the shell gun mounted, fresh coal bunkers, a magazine, and a cock-pit beneath the water line constructed; and the *Fiery Cross* was equipped for sea, well found in every respect, except as regards her supply of coals, which was rather scanty.

As she lay in Pelican Creek, watching a chance to get away, it was necessary to keep the fires lighted and banked up, so that she could be got under steam in a few minutes.

This necessitated a constant consumption of coal, which, though trifling, they could ill afford.

From the main topgallant yard a view of the sea beyond could be commanded, and hither at early morning on the fourth day Stanton Glynne, and his chief officer, Captain George, mounted.

They could plainly make out the two Yankee vessels—the gunboat and the paddle-wheel steamer—prowling about outside the entrance, distant about three-quarters of a mile therefrom.

To a practised eye, it was at once apparent that the paddle steamer was much the faster of the two.

They were steaming to and fro, crossing each other opposite the mouth of the creek. On each occasion the paddle steamer arrived here first, and had to wait a short time for her companion, in order that they might both take their departure from the same place at the same time.

This was one reason why they concluded the steamer was faster than the gunboat.

Their cruise extended to about three-quarters of a mile on either side of the delta, or labyrinth of channels, which led up to the creek, and which they feared to attempt.

Evidently the Yankees had scent of their prey—had received information that a rebel vessel lay concealed within, and therefore maintained a strict blockade.

"We may wait here till doomsday," said Captain George; "they know we're here, and have got their instructions to keep us here."

"Yes, I am afraid we have been betrayed. We must make a run for it."

"Better send some of the top-hamper down. I fancy she can see our topgallant masts."

"Not till the moment we move."

After a brief consultation, it was decided that the Fiery Cross should get up all steam, creep down to the entrance of the creek, and lie there until the moment arrived for a dash out.

This was fixed for the time when the two blockading vessels parted opposite the entrance of the outlet, each steaming half a mile to the right and left.

They calculated that the Fiery Cross would thus dash out just as the enemy were at the greatest distance from each other.

Thus, when the pursuit began, the rebel would be at the apex of a triangle with a very broad base.

The wind was blowing strongly in shore, and this was

in their favour, for the Fiery Cross was better adapted for sailing on a wind than either of the blockaders.

All being in readiness, the anchor was hove noiselessly up, and with a full head of steam escaping by the safety valve, the little privateer moved slowly down the creek.

Before starting, her topgallant masts had been struck. As, however, when the expected chase began she would require every inch of canvas to aid her steaming, the men stood ready to send the masts aloft again, and cross the yards the very instant she should dart forth from her concealment.

Along the west side of the creek ran a sandy beach on which fine trees grew thickly. This sandy land was continued in the form of a narrow spur, the end of which formed one of the heads of the harbour. Though the land was so low, the trees effectually hid the masts of the little vessel as she slowly steamed along close to the land.

"Up with the topgallant masts and yards—bear a hand, my men; we shall be abreast of the points in five minutes, and then, hurrah! for the open sea! Foretopmast yard, there. What of the enemy?"

"They are now approaching each other," cried Captain George, who had so posted himself as a look-out. "Now the paddle steamer is abreast of the creek. She is lying-to—head to the east, waiting for the gunboat. Now the other comes up—they are both lying-to, speaking each other, I think."

"Stop her," cried the captain.

"Now they're off," shouted Captain George, after a pause of a few moments; "the gunboat to the west, the paddle steamer towards Mobile."

"Up with those topgallant masts, men; away, away; loose the topsail courses, jib and spanker—bear a hand."

This occupied some five minutes, and when done, Stanton Glynné again hailed the foretopmast yard.

"What of the enemy?"

"Nigh a mile apart. Now's our time, captain."

"Go ahead—full speed," shouted Stanton Glynné. "Weights on the safety-valve, fat on the furnaces—hard a-port the helm. Steady!"

And then, like a king-fisher darting from its nest, out

dashed the little Fiery Cross from the shelter of the trees, and obeying her helm, her head swept round till it pointed to the south-west.

"Steady—so. Keep her as she is."

In two minutes she was in full view of the Yankees, tearing along through the water, sending the foam flying from her bows, as with extra pressure she clave the sea. All hands worked with a will, and one after another the broad sheets of canvas were braced to the wind.

It was some little time before the blockading vessels saw their enemy, and when they did so they were unable all at once to wear round, for be it remembered they were steaming in opposite directions, with their sterns towards the creek entrance at the moment the rebel came out.

This might seem great folly on their part, but it must be remembered that there were many *bayous*—false passages and impracticable entrances to Pelican Creek, and the Yankee officers knew not which was the right one.

The gunboat was the first to observe the Fiery Cross, and instantly firing a gun to call the attention of her consort, put her helm hard up, and proceeded to wear round.

There was no use for disguise, so when the smoke of the gun cleared away, the Yankees had the pleasure, if pleasure it was, of seeing the Confederate flag flying from the peak of the saucy barque-rigged steamer.

Stanton Glynne kept her headed to the S.W., more towards the gunboat than the steamer. This at first might seem questionable policy, but it must be remembered that the paddle steamer was much the faster of the two, and that while it would be easy to shake off the gunboat, the other might give them a hot chase, and even overhaul them.

So rapidly did the little vessel come out from her hiding-place, and so swiftly did she skim over the water, under the combined influence of sails and a high pressure of steam, that by the time the Taurus—that was the name of the gunboat—had got her bows round towards her, there was clear interval of a mile between them, and of a mile and a quarter between her and the paddle steamer. Now the chase began in earnest.

The Fiery Cross was the first to fire a shotted gun. She was heading in such a manner that the Taurus was on her starboard bow, a little before the beam, and the pivot shell gun could thus be easily brought to bear.

The first shot fell a little short, though the direction was admirable; the next, however, struck the mizzen rigging, and some of the splinters flying to the wheel, wounded the men and broke the tiller ropes. This was an exceedingly lucky shot, for the gunboat thereupon flew up head to wind, and it was fully five minutes ere she was again ready to start in pursuit; and in that five minutes the rebel privateer had placed another mile clear between them, and was, to all intents and purposes, out of range.

Immediately that this mishap occurred to the enemy, the helm was put up a little and the vessel allowed to go free, so as nearly to present her stern to the steamer.

The gunboat fired a few shots, and then finding they fell shorter and shorter, gave up the chase, leaving the steamer to pursue.

A council of war was now held—for Stanton Glynne determined on most occasions to consult the opinions of his officers—as to whether they should turn and fight the steamer.

The council was composed of the captain, the four lieutenants, and the captain of marines, Hubert Glynne. It was held on the quarter-deck, where the enemy could be constantly observed. After some discussion, opinions were equally divided; Stanton Glynne, Hubert, and one of the lieutenants being for fighting.

"It is strange if we can't whip a bit of a passenger paddle boat like that," exclaimed the later.

Two other of the lieutenants, however, were for caution, and objected to fighting, unless compelled to do so. Captain George was the last to give his opinion; should he incline to a fight, of course the preponderance would be greatly on that side, and such a course would be determined on; on the other hand, should he incline the other way, opinions would be equally divided.

"Well, gentlemen, I tell you frankly, in this case, I'm against fighting, and I'll tell you my reasons. Now

there's no doubt we have a good chance of victory, probably should win, but then again we might lose; an unlucky shot in our engine-room or rudder might cripple the vessel completely and put her at the enemy's mercy. Now I put it to you, is the risk worth the advantage we shall gain if we win ?

"Is the danger we run worth the gain and glory we may get? I say, no. If we win we shall succeed in sinking or capturing an insignificant paddle steamer, of which the United States have or can get hundreds. But if we lose, we lose the whole Confederate navy, for this is the only ship Confederacy has afloat. We forego all the damage we may inflict on the enemy's merchantmen, all the terror and dismay we may cause the greedy Northern merchants who are now urging on the war against us, and for what?—for the chance of winning a barren victory. If we are overhauled by the Yankee, and it becomes a question of fight or surrender, I say fight as long as we have a deck beneath our feet, but as at present we can run, let our heels save us, if possible."

Although the votes were equal, this speech of the Englishman decided the point.

"First lieutenant, Captain George is right" (he was never called anything except Captain George, indeed no one knew his Christian name, or whether this he now went by was a *nom de guerre*), said Stanton Glynne. "We should be wanting in duty did we stop to give battle to this Yankee merely for the sake of glory and bravado."

A close examination of the enemy now led them to believe that the paddle steamer was gaining on them. Ten minutes more put the matter beyond doubt; she was creeping up slowly but surely.

Shortly after, a heavy squall of rain came on, and for the time hid the two vessels from each other, but it soon passed away and revealed the Yankee under all sail and steam, and evidently gaining. On this the Fiery Cross was hauled up to the wind nearly three points, thus bringing the wind so far forward that the other was no longer able to carry sail with effect, and now in turn the chased began to gain on her pursuer. But the boilers of

the rebel now began to "prime" furiously, and it was absolutely necessary to slacken speed for a time, and as this was done, the Yankee again crept up gradually; however, the foaming in the boilers ceased, and she was again put to full speed. Scarcely had this been done than the man on the look-out on the foretopsail yard cried:

"Sail ho!"

"Where away?"

"Right ahead."

Going forward on the fore-castle, the young commander saw a large vessel, hitherto hid by a rain squall, bearing right down on them.

This was a cause of great anxiety, as from the direction whence she came, it appeared likely she was one of the blockading squadron off the mouth of the Mississippi.

Ten minutes more were sufficient to convince the officers of the privateer that it was a large man-of-war, and almost of a certainty a Yankee.

The signal was given to take in sail and haul up the courses, and furl them.

This done, the topsails were clued up and furled, the jib hauled down, and the Fiery Cross put head to wind. Her speed was now much diminished, and she laboured considerably through a somewhat heavy head sea. The big vessel loomed up nearer and nearer, and now there was no doubt whatever as to her character. The Yankee paddle steamer fired a gun, and commenced signalling, and immediately the stranger headed round in pursuit of the rebel. It was an anxious time the next quarter hour.

The large vessel was recognized as the United States war steam frigate, Brooklyn, carrying an armament of heavy guns, and three hundred men. To contend with her would be hopeless, and all that remained was to run for it.

At first it appeared that the huge vessel gained on her little enemy, but more steam was got up by fat plentifully supplied to the fires, and tying the safety-valve down. This was, of course, dangerous, but it had its effect, and in an hour from the time she commenced the Brooklyn gave up the chase, and the crew of the rebel

privateer gave three hearty cheers as her baffled pursuer put up her helm and sullenly resumed her course.

Meanwhile the paddle steamer had been hopelessly distanced, and when she saw the big ship give up the pursuit, did so likewise.

And now the rebel privateer is fairly at sea, and about to begin her gallant career.

The Rebel Privateer

CHAPTER VIII

THE REBEL PRIVATEER AT SEA.

WHEN the excitement and enthusiasm consequent on the escape of the Fiery Cross had somewhat subsided, Captain Glynn ordered the purser to "splice the main brace," i.e. serve all hands a glass of grog.

This done, he called the crew aft, and having read the articles of war and his commission, made a brief address—

"My men,—You have shipped on a cruise in which there is plenty of prize money to be made, lots of glory, and, don't deceive yourselves, a fair share of danger. Our ship, though small, is stanch and very fast, as she has just now proved. When she is lighter and in better trim she will, I doubt not, prove yet faster. I do not mean to fight her if I can help it. But should an occasion arise when it becomes an alternative between that or surrender, I trust you will all do your duty. But every man of you will remember the glorious cause for which we fight, and stand to his guns so long as strength shall remain. Let me impress on you, men, the necessity for discipline and subordination. Any disorderly conduct will be promptly punished. And, in conclusion, let me recommend coolness in action—the less excitement and shouting the better. Let every man go into battle, when the day comes, calm, collected, and determined to win the day. Be true to yourselves and your country, and victory will not fail to rest on our flag."

This address was received with cheers, which having subsided, the captain proceeded to inspect and divide the crew into watches for working the ship, and divisions for manning the guns and so forth. The thirty-six volunteers he apportioned principally to the latter duty, as it would be far easier for them to learn the great gun exercise than a sailor's work at the rigging and aloft.

The marines he placed on duty all day, using them as sentries, and to pull and haul about on the ropes. Four of the sailors, for extra wages, volunteered as firemen, of whom there was a scarcity.

The watches having been set, and a short exercise of the guns gone through, the crew, except those on immediate duty, were dismissed to their suppers; and the captain, spreading a chart on the cabin table, proceeded to explain his plan of operations. This was as follows:—

“First then,” he went on to say, “I propose to cruise about for a day or two in the Gulf, in the track of Yankee vessels bound to Cuba, and other West India Islands. We may thus pick up several prizes. Then I propose to cross the Gulf stream and look out for Indianmen and Chinamen homeward bound. In the course of a fortnight, even though we use ever so great economy by only firing up when we see a chance, we shall probably be short of fuel. I propose then to run back and boldly enter Havannah harbour, with which I am well acquainted.”

“Will the Captain-General permit us to coal there?” asked one.

“I don’t see how he can refuse. The Confederacy has been acknowledged as a belligerent.”

“Will it not be very dangerous to return to Havannah so soon after committing depredations in the immediate neighbourhood?”

“I think not more dangerous than anywhere else. The enemy will be thrown off his guard, and will not imagine we shall dare to seek a harbour so near their Gulf squadron and the fleets blockading Mobile and New Orleans.”

After a little more discussion it was so settled, and the vessel kept in a S.E. course across the Gulf.

The night passed quietly enough, not a sail being sighted or any incident worth relating occurring. In the morning the fires were allowed to go down very low and the ship was put under sail. But though a bright look out was kept from the masthead, not a solitary vessel appeared in sight; this was partly an advantage, for it gave time to perfect the crew in their gun drill,

clear the decks of all lumber, and paint her so as to look as much as possible like a merchantman. To assist in this delusion arrangements were made by which the big gun amidships could be completely concealed ; this was done by means of a lot of boxes and packages, piled up on the main hatch so as to resemble passengers' baggage. It was so disposed, however, that in five minutes it could be all thrown on one side, and the gun ready for fighting. The yards, too, were purposely badly trimmed, and it was even an object with her young commander to make her look as dirty and slovenly as possible without.

In board, however, she was all ship-shape and "man-o'-war fashion." Her brass work was all glittering bright ; her decks, except where already they had been in places stained with blood, white as holystone and sand could make them ; her ropes all neatly coiled down on the deck, while around the masts, in racks for the purpose, stood a goodly array of boarding pikes and cutlasses.

By the evening of the second day the Fiery Cross was in thorough trim, for either fighting or running. Her crew had settled down to their duties, and were rapidly getting into a very efficient state of discipline.

The broadside guns were worked with the utmost readiness and promptitude, for many of the volunteers who accompanied Hubert Glynne had been officers in volunteer or regular artillery corps. Her decks in the evening sunlight presented a singular and picturesque appearance. The absence of any regular uniform, except among the officers, gave her a somewhat lawless look, not entirely unbecoming her character and arms ; for though a regularly commissioned ship of war in strict fact, still she was in great part a private enterprise of the daring spirits who ruled the quarter-deck, and might, without much injustice, be termed a privateer, not in reproach, be it observed.

This effect was greatly increased by the thirty-six friends of Hubert Glynne, rated on the books as supernumerary midshipmen. They were in every possible variety of costume ; some in mufti, some in undress cavalry uniform, others in that of some volunteer corps ;

others again in artillery uniform, but none as naval midshipmen. These were a little in the way at first, especially on the morning of the second day at sea, when it blew pretty stiffly. They were not sailors, and some of them were rather sea-sick. Hubert Glynne and his brother stood together near the mizzen rigging, regarding a group of these young men, none of whom could keep their feet, several looking very white about the gills.

"I am afraid, captain and brother, these shore friends of mine are rather in the way—likely to prove more harm than good. I know what contempt you sailors have for us land-lubbers."

"Not a bit of it, my dear boy. In this case you are quite mistaken. Wait a few days, till they get their sea legs; they're handy enough at the guns now. I don't want them to go aloft, or haul in the ropes. Wait till we have to take an enemy's ship by the board; those are the lads for me then. I'm very glad we've got them. The ship seems rather crowded; but it's better to have too many than too few, if they are good men. Why, with the hundred and forty men we can muster, I wouldn't mind boarding a big gunboat or small frigate. If ever we are tackled, and can't get away, I shall try for close quarters—there is our chance. The enemy, as likely as not, would be so taken aback by our audacity as to give us an easy victory."

"Slow work this, captain," said our friend the Englishman, coming up; "the third day and not a sail sighted."

"We're hardly in the track of them yet," was the quiet reply; "wait till we get a little nearer Cuba, then we shall catch 'em like herrings."

At that moment Captain George caught sight of a black face with large great rolling eyes, the whites of which were visible all round, just above the engine-room scuttle. "I'll show you a bit of fun, if you're in the humour," he said to the brothers.

"Blaze away!"

"Here, Jupiter."

"Yes, sar," said that worthy, a big buck nigger, tumbling on deck and coming aft with anything but an elegant shamble; "you call me. Massa Cap'in George?"

"Where's Darby Kelly?"

"De kernel? oh, he's down in de stoke-hole, jis done banking up de fires for de night."

"Go and fetch him, and oblige the captain here with a dance—you know, that hubaboloo dance Darby Kelly taught you."

"Oh; my golly, massa, I ain't 'xactly so fond o' dat dance as I mort be. It makes de knowledge box so 'nation sore."

"Go and fetch him."

"Who the devil is this the nigger calls the colonel? You don't mean to say there's a colonel down the stoke-hole with the firemen?"

"Isn't there, though. Colonel Kelly would not be well pleased if he heard you dispute his rank."

"Explain?"

"No time now; here comes the terpsichorean heroes. Now for a dance, and such a dance."

As he spoke, Colonel Kelly—as he chose to call himself, having been once dubbed so in fun—came aft with the nigger Jupiter, with whom he was on the most intimate and friendly terms. They had gone through many a hard fight and desperate adventure together, as the readers of the *Black Angel* and *Star of the South* will doubtless remember.

The great hulking Irishman, strong as a bull, his face beaming with fun and humour, came shuffling off.

"Sarvise to ye, Cap'in George; sarvise to ye, jintlemin all. The naygur here, my naygur, said as ye wanted me."

"Who say I your nigger, you Irisher? I'se a free soger nigger o' de Confederate Status of South Americay. All de niggers as fights for de Confederate Status is free niggers; hain't dey, boss?"

"That is too difficult a question for me to answer on the spur of the moment," replied Captain Glynne, with a smile; "I'll consider the point."

"Now, look here, jintlemin, and you, Cap'n George. Didn't I buy this here naygur right out for fifty dollars?"

"Fifty dollars!" cried Jupiter, contemptuously; "a nigger like dis chile for fifty dollars! Why, I'se worth

fifteen hundred dollars dis very minit ef I'se worth a cent."

"Well, well; never mind about it now. We'll settle that point another time. We want a dance now."

"Whare's de foifer?" asked Darby Kelly, looking round.

"Say, aft one of you fellows who can play the fife," cried the captain.

The fifer came aft, and the word having been passed round that the nigger and the Irishman were going to dance for a wager one against the other, the crew crowded as far as the magic precincts of the quarter-deck, on which, of course, no one presumed to step.

Darby Kelly placed himself opposite the negro, and prepared for the dance. Previously, however, he had provided himself with a belaying-pin from the rail, handing one also to Jupiter.

"'Rocky Road to Dublin,' Jupiter? just as ye loike."

"Say, Massa Kelly," the nigger interrupted, "dat won't do for dis chile."

"What won't do?"

"Reckon you've got a iron belaying-pin, Massa Irisher."

"And, be Jabers, your head's iron, an' that makes it fair and square."

But Jupiter stoutly objected to Darby having an iron belaying-pin, whilst the one he carried was of wood. So, as otherwise Jupiter would not dance, Darby put back the iron belaying-pin in the rail and took a wooden one.

"Why, man alive," said Captain George, "you'd break his skull with that."

"Divil a fear, boss; I'd be jintle wid him; on'y just tap loike."

But Jupiter by no means felt inclined to trust to the gentleness of Darby's taps, having before had some experience thereof.

And now the saltatorious champions are ready to begin, stripped to the waist, each the picture of muscular strength, the negro the bigger and heavier of the two.

In true scientific style the fifer began the well-known

tune, at the first slowly; and then the negro cut most wonderful and elaborate steps, his feet flying hither and thither, and coming down on the deck with a sound like that of a flat board; the Irishman, too, went in for fancy dancing, but in quite a different style. He kept his feet pretty well together, and indulged in double-shuffles and other quick steps. Presently, however, they warmed to their work, and the fun began.

"I dance ye down dis time, kernel, any way," the nigger cried. "You're a sweatin' like a bull."

"Divil a bit o' it, naygur. When yez dance me down, ye'll on'y have one more to bate, and that's the divil."

Faster and faster went the clattering feet. Jupiter, eyes rolling, mouth working, head rocking to and fro in the most comical fashion.

Darby Kelly set his teeth hard, stuck his arms akimbo, and rattled away on the planks with his nimble feet, not making so much noise as Jupiter, yet quite keeping pace with him. Faster and more furious grew the fun, till after about ten minutes Darby shouted the one word—

"Over!"

And then, quick as thought, the two dancers changed sides, each, as he did so, aiming a blow at the other's head. Both, however, were too clever, and the two belaying-pins clashed together in the mid-air.

"You warn't quick enuff, Irisher," cried the nigger, grinning from ear to ear, but not stopping the dance for a single second.

The excitement now ran high; bets were made among the crew aft, for their to-morrow's grog, as to which would last out the other.

The nigger was, if anything, the favourite, for as yet his ebon skin did not show the slightest sign of moisture, while the other was perspiring profusely.

"The nigger wins! Go it, Jupiter! Two to one on coal-hole!"

"Dance, Darby, dance!" shouted a friend of his from among the crew. "Chuck yer legs about, man alive. Wud ye be bate by a naygur, and dishgrace yer counthry for iver and iver?"

And in response to the call Darby did dance. His feet

rattled down upon the planks at such a rate as to make it impossible to follow them, nor, though he perspired so freely, did he show any signs of distress. This time the nigger gave the word—

“Over!”

And quick as thought—quicker than it might have been thought possible for his huge and somewhat clumsy bulk—he made a big leap across, and as he passed the Irishman, while still in the air, he dealt him a tolerably hard rap with the wooden belaying-pin—a rap which made Darby’s head sound again, and elicited roars of laughter from the assembled crew.

“Yah, yah, yah!” laughed the negro, still dancing with might and main; “had ye there, Massa Darby.”

“Huld hard a bit, ye black scoundral; I’ll be even wid yez prisintly,” replied Darby, as he rubbed the place on his head.

They had now been at it nigh a quarter of an hour without a moment’s cessation, the nigger still cutting prodigious capers, throwing his feet about as if they did not belong to him; his antagonist still keeping pace with him, but dancing more together.

Again rose shouts of encouragement to either champion from their respective admirers.

Once again came the sharp word of command, “Over!”—this time from the Irishman; and the spectators, who now understood the rules of this grotesque and somewhat rough dance, looked out for the clip on the head which one or other of the two would receive.

Again, however, the belaying-pins clashed together, and no harm was done. It really seemed that the nigger would ultimately get the best of it, for though neither showed any signs of tiring, Darby had received a pretty severe rap on the head, which the other had not.

And now the climax approaches. It is apparent that neither can keep this up much longer; both are puffing and blowing, though of the two the Irishman seems the more distressed.

In crossing over the next time Jupiter tries the same dodge, and makes a big leap, striking as he flies past, but this time without effect, for Darby Kelly is on his guard,

and the blow falls in empty air ; and still to the merry tune of the fife, which increases in pace, the two champions keep on.

Taking advantage of a moment at which the negro's lower limbs are all abroad, thrown hither and thither in the execution of some tremendous step, as if they were going to part company from his body altogether, Darby Kelly shouts the word of command—"Over!"—and quick as thought, dancing up, delivers his belaying-pin with such good effect as to send Jupiter staggering a yard or so, and just knock him out of step. The negro, however, regains the time, and dances on for a few seconds, endeavouring, though vainly, to cut the same wonderful capers as heretofore. That crash on the head has taken all the steam out of him, and all at once he comes to a dead standstill, and places his hand to his wool.

"D—— you Irish eyes ! I b'lieve you smashed my skull right in."

And with these words he beat a precipitate and undignified retreat to the stoke-hole.

Darby Kelly gives vent to a wild "whoop" of triumph, which he was fond of calling his Tipperary war cry ; and is hailed the victor amidst uproarious applause.

"Splice the main-brace," the captain cried, laughing. "Darby, you did your part admirably. Lieutenant," to Captain George, "I compliment you on your protégé."

"Shure, sur, an' science will pervail. Did yer hanner note the iligant way I fetched him that crack on de head ? That was what they call the 'cow-de-grass.' "

"Eight-bells, sir," said the midshipman of the watch, coming aft to the lieutenant.

"Strike it. All hands turn in quietly now, except those on duty. A bright look-out from the foretopsail yard. South-east and by east is her course, Mr. Wharnccliffe."

Then all the officers but the lieutenant of the watch went below into the cabin to drink success to their ship in the eight-o'clock grog.

The night passed without adventure, the ship nearly close hauled on the wind, which was about N.N.E.

CHAPTER IX.

THE FIRST CRUISE, AND WHAT CAME OF IT.

“SAIL ho!”

At the very first dawn of day such was the cry which echoed all over the ship, and in five minutes there was not a sleeper on board. Every man and boy, from the captain downwards, rushed on deck.

There she was, right in the eye of the wind, dead to windward, and standing on the opposite tack.

“Pass the word to light the furnace fires,” cried the captain. “All hands about ship.”

The Fiery Cross was put about, and was soon on the same tack as the stranger, who was distant at least fifteen miles. Her three topgallant and royal yards could be made out, and by the cut of the sails it was the universal opinion she was a large Yankee merchantman. It was half an hour before the steam could be got up, and during that time it was discovered by careful observation that she was indeed a clipper, and without steam could easily show the Fiery Cross her heels.

The order was given to furl all sails, and this done the vessel was headed to within three points of the wind, and sent ahead at full speed. Of course, under these circumstances the rebel worked up to windward, but there was a stiff, steady breeze and smooth water, and the chase, which sailed like the wind, forereached rapidly.

Captain Glynne, however, determined to get well up to windward before easing off, and seeking the aid of his sails as well. In an hour's time the chase was broad on the weather bow, and from the rate at which she sailed had increased her distance.

In two hours she was near dead ahead, and by eight bells right ahead, a mere speck on the horizon. The crew were very impatient, and chafed and fumed desperately at seeing their hoped-for prize thus slip away as it seemed.

But the young commander of the Little Cross, as the men called her, well knew what he was doing, and when the chase was a point on the lee bow, then he gave the word to set the fore and aft sails.

This being done, another anxious hour was passed, the relative distance between the two vessels remaining apparently unchanged.

Still, however, the young commander kept on his course, edging slowly and surely to windward, heeding neither the rising murmurs of his crew nor the anxious looks and words of his own officers.

Not till the chase was a good three points on the lee bow did he give the word—

“Loose and set all the spare sails. Keep her away three points.”

This brought the chase dead ahead. With a shout of joy the nimble seamen sprang aloft, and in less than a quarter hour the Fiery Cross was one sheet of white canvas fore and aft. Every stitch of sail was set, even the foretopmast and maintopmast stunsails.

This having been done, and every sail stretched till the lee-ropes were as taut as a bar, every brace hauled well in, and everything ship-shape, the men clustered on the fore-castle, in the fore-rigging, anywhere they could, and gazed out ahead on the expected prize. The vessel, by the aid of a full pressure of steam and the great spread of canvas to the breeze, was now rattling ahead at the rate of quite thirteen knots, and in less than half an hour it was obvious to every one that they were coming up with the chase hand over hand.

Those who had been most impatient and discontented as they saw the coveted prize slowly fade away till she was a mere speck on the horizon now acknowledged the prudence and sound judgment of their commander. He had got the weather gauge, and could now avail himself of all his sails, besides being able to keep her off a point. This rapidly told a tale. When first the square sails had been set, the stranger must have been nearly twenty miles off, her royals just discernible through the glass. In two hours from that time she was barely ten miles away, and they could see the greater part

of her topsails. They had overhauled her ten knots in two hours.

Another hour brought her hull in view, and now no one doubted that she was a Yankee.

She perceived now that she was chased, and probably felt some alarm, for she kept off from the wind good two points, set stu'n sails abow and aloft, and crowded on every inch of canvas possible.

Too late, unhappy Yankee; the enemy, stanch and sure as a sleuth hound, fleet as a greyhound, is on your track.

On seeing this attempt to escape, the captain, who stood at the wheel conning her, motioned with his hand to the helmsman to keep her off a little, a quiet smile on his face, for he felt assured now that if the chase were a Yankee she would ere long be his prize.

Hand over hand the rebel steamer overhauled her, and in little more than half an hour the other, a large, square rigged vessel, fully a thousand tons, was in range.

He waited, however, till she was within a mile, and nearly dead to leeward.

Then he fired a shot across her bows to bring her to, at the same time running up the red ensign of England. There was a pause of excited expectation.

Then a cheer rang to the sky from the deck of the Fiery Cross as the stars and stripes was seen to mount to the peak of the chase.

Instantly down came the English ensign, and up went the Confederate flag, to the dismay of the Yankee, who had doubtless congratulated himself on his groundless fears of an English steamer.

Resistance was out of the question; so, though slowly and sullenly, the Yankee hove her maintopsail to the mast. A boat was sent to her with a prize crew, and orders to bring the captain and as many of her men as the boat would hold returning on board.

She proved to be the ship *Spartan*, of Boston, from Havannah, bound to the former port with a valuable cargo of sugar, rum, cigars, and tobacco—a welcome haul for the rebel tars.

CHAPTER X.

BLOCKADED IN CIENFUEGOS.

"CHEER up, man, it's the fortune of war," said Stanton Glynne. "I'll be bound now, you, being a New Englander, were red hot to crush out the rebellion—all for blood and slaughter—kill the accursed rebels, confiscate their lands, and so forth. Now you've lost your ship, of which I see you are part owner, how do you like the war now it's brought home to your own door?"

"War! I don't call it war. It's piracy," said the Yankee captain, surlily.

"Oh, yes, my fine fellow, you thought you would have it all your own way—ruin our property, free *our* slaves, burn down our houses, devastate our lands, all that is fair war; but touch your own pockets, that is piracy, most logical Yankee."

Stanton Glynne laughed. He could afford to do so according to the old adage, "Let those laugh who win," but the New England skipper was in no laughing mood.

"What are you going to do with my ship?"

"Don't know yet; make a bonfire of her, very likely."

"Make a bonfire of her—oh, Lord! What, burn the Spartan? a bran new ship, worth two hundred thousand dollars, if she's worth a cent—you can't mean it."

"Can't I? I tell you it depends on circumstances. Now then, Captain Josiah Welch, which will you do, give your parole not to attempt escape or treachery of any kind, or be put in irons with the rest of your crew?"

"Put me in irons, and be d—— to you, cussed rebel!"

"Ah, ha! insolent, I see. Captain Glynne," to his brother, "bring a file of your marines and put this man in irons. Solitary confinement till he apologizes for his insolence to an officer of the Confederate States."

The Yankee skipper did not expect he would be taken at his word; he had such an idea of the tremendous power of the United States, that he opined no rebel would dare put him in irons.

However, he found out his mistake; and alone, a prisoner in the lazaretto, he had time to chew the bitter cud of reflection, and lament over the loss of his ship and a share of 200,000 dollars.

A couple of hours were occupied in ransacking the ship for valuables, and moving them on board the Fiery Cross. As much rum, sugar, and other stores as the captain thought necessary were also transferred on board the rebel, and then, having given directions to the officer in charge of the prize crew to keep as close as possible, the little steamer put about, and the fires being suffered to go down to save the coal, she cruised about under sail, making a good seven knots.

"Sail, ho!"

Again the welcome sound falls on the ears of the crew, and nearly right ahead two small dark specks can be perceived on the horizon by the practised eyes of the sailors.

All sail is made, and the ship is allowed to proceed without getting steam up, as it was an object of paramount importance to save every ton of coal possible. In this case, there was no necessity for burning the precious mineral, for the vessels were coming right in the teeth of the Fiery Cross, and in an hour's time two good-sized brigs could be made out, sailing merrily along together. In another half-hour the Fiery Cross ranged up between them, and hailed the nearest.

Apparently the skippers of them were in no concern.

"What brig is that?"

"The Jane Dawson, of Portland, Maine, from Matanzas, bound for Boston. What vessel's that?"

"The Confederate steam-ship of war, Fiery Cross. You are our prize. Let the captain come on board with his papers, and be spry about it."

While this was being done, the other brig was hove to by a shot across her bows, and in half an hour the crews of both were on board and in irons, the skippers, more

The Rebel Privateer.

wise than he of the Spartan, being content to give their paroles.

These other two were thoroughly ransacked for valuables and specie, a prize-crew put on board, and then the vessel continued on her cruise, followed by her three captors.

It was now evening, so to avoid the chance of losing any of the others, sail was shortened on the Fiery Cross, lights displayed, and the officers in command of the prize crews directed to keep close.

After a brief consultation with his officers, the rebel commander resolved to bear up for the port of Cienfuegos, in Cuba, in order, if possible, to dispose of the prizes, and capture any other Yankees which might be entering or leaving the port, before the alarm as to the proximity of the rebel in these waters should spread.

Shortly after dawn in the morning, "Land ho!" was proclaimed from the masthead and at eight bells the welcome cry, "Sail ho!" This time, however, they were doomed to disappointment, for on hoisting the stars and stripes, the stranger, a large barque, replied with English ensign; and she looked so thoroughly British, that it was not thought worth while even to lower a boat, in order to examine her papers.

The vessel was now hauled close up under the land, along which she slowly made her way towards the harbour of Cienfuegos, distant some thirty miles.

Presently a large barque was descried standing in for the land, and the rebel steamer gallantly went forth to meet her. A shot across her bows brought her to, and in reply to the Yankee flag which Captain Glynn caused to be hoisted, the stars and stripes fluttered to her peak.

Again a ringing cheer pealed forth from the crew, and the decoy ensign being hauled down, the Confederate flag floated in its stead.

Great was the dismay of the Yankee, which proved to be the barque J. Grierson, of New York, for Cienfuegos, of 690 tons burden.

Resistance, of course, was out of the question, so a prize-crew was put on board, and she was numbered as the fourth prize of the rebel privateer.

The four captures were ordered to stand away in the offing a bit, while the mischievous little rebel again crept in under the land along towards the harbour, now not more than eight or ten miles distant. Steam was got up now, as it was possible there might be a Yankee man-of-war lying inside.

So long as the Fiery Cross kept within the marine league of the shore she was safe, of course, as the laws of neutrality would protect her, but an enemy catching her in that position might, if possessed of nearly equal speed, blockade her there, and render escape very difficult.

Presently the patience and caution of the Confederate cruiser was rewarded, for a steamer was seen coming out of the harbour, having in tow two vessels—a large brig and a barque.

Each of these, utterly unconscious of their danger, had the Yankee flag floating gaily from her peak.

It was now early noon, and a bright clear day, but the rebel cruiser lying close under the shadow of the high land entirely escaped observation. They saw the tug steamer cast off the two vessels and return to the harbour, and waited patiently till the brig and the barque had gone a clear four miles from the land. Then all at once her decks swarmed with men, the black smoke poured from her funnel, and away she dashed from her concealment in pursuit of her prey. It was a short chase, for in half an hour both vessels were hove to, the stars and stripes going to the peak of each when challenged. They proved to be the barque Altona and the brig West Wind, both of New England, and for that reason most welcome prizes, for these New England States had been all along the most rampant for war and the bitterest foes of the Southerners. The captains and crews were put on board the rebel, and prize crews were got on board the new captures.

Captain Glynn now ordered all the six prizes to stand on and off outside the harbour at a distance of some five miles, and appointed the fastest sailing of the brigs to act as reconnoiterers to give notice of the approach of any large vessel which might look like a man-of-war. This having been arranged, the Fiery Cross boldly

steamed into the harbour, a bright look out, however, being kept for any Yankee war ship which might by chance be lying there at anchor. Such, however, was not the case, and steaming well up the harbour, the rebel cruiser cast anchor. So soon as this was done a boat was despatched with a lieutenant bearing a letter to the Governor. This was brief, and to the purpose:—

“ C.S. steamer, Fiery Cross, Cienfuegos,
Island of Cuba.

“ SIR,—I have the honour to inform your Excellency of my arrival in this port, with six prizes of war. They are all the property of citizens of the United States, which States are now waging an unjust and aggressive war upon the Confederate States, which I have the honour with this ship under my command to serve. I have to request permission to leave the prizes here in safe keeping, in order to be adjudicated on in due course by the prize courts of the Confederate States. I also further request permission to coal and take in such refreshments as I may think needful.

“ I have the honour to be, &c., &c.

“ STANTON GLYNNE,

“ Commander of C.S. steamer, Fiery Cross.

“ To his Excellency the Governor of the City of
Cienfuegos, Island of Cuba.”

There was a delay of four hours before an answer came from the Governor. It was short, to the purpose, but, alas! unfavourable. The Governor declared—

“ 1. No cruiser of either party can bring their prizes into Spanish ports.

“ 2. If in any captures the territory of Cuba has been violated, the Spanish Courts will themselves judge of the matter.

“ 3. Any prizes brought in will be retained until instructions can be had from her Majesty the Queen of Spain.”

Under these circumstances it is not surprising that the

Confederate commander resolved not to bring his prizes in, but to take a very different course.

As for coaling, the Governor furthermore said that the ships of either belligerent might take in coal or anything else that their commanders were willing to purchase and the inhabitants to sell, except arms and contraband of war. Furthermore, he added, the rule which required that when two vessels of the respective belligerent nations were in port together, the one leaving first should have twenty-four hours' start before the other should be suffered to leave, provided that both had cast anchor.

This was a small grain of comfort for a great disappointment, but there was no help for it, so Captain Glynne secured a pilot to bring him in again (as it was by this time dark), and went out to make the final arrangements as to the prizes.

The prize crews and everything of value was put on board the cruiser, then a tar barrel was emptied in the cabin of each, they were attached together by a strong hauser, a light was set to them, and the Fiery Cross hauled off a little way to watch the spectacle. It was about nine at night when the flames burst from first one then another of the doomed vessels, until all were enveloped in the devouring element.

The sight was grand—awful in the extreme. It seemed almost unnatural for man thus to set fire to man's work, the fruits of such patient toil and skill. As the flames leaped higher and higher, licking the rigging and shrouding the hulls in one sheet of fire, several of the Yankee skippers wept tears of bitter grief. But Hubert Glynne, laying his hand on the shoulder of the nearest, said, sternly—

“My man, you may know by this how we Southern men feel when we see our homes devastated, pillaged, destroyed, and committed to the flames by your Vandal hordes. A week back I saw the old plantation-house, where I once resided, burned. I did not weep, but I swore a bitter oath of vengeance; and, please God, I'll keep it!”

Fiercer and fiercer rage the devouring flames, till the sea for miles around is lit up by the glare. The eyes of

the sailors, leaning over the bulwarks, gleamed brightly, and their faces looked fierce and triumphant in the blaze.

The rebel cruiser, steaming slowly around the burning ships, seemed like some spirit of evil gloating over his work.

It was a sight, once seen, never to be forgotten! The silence of the sea unbroken, save by the crackling of the wood and the roaring of the flames—and the whole expanse of the ocean waves, as far as the eye could reach, glittering and flashing in the unwonted light.

In less than an hour, all that remained of the six vessels, a short while back merrily ploughing their way over the sea, were a few pieces of smouldering wreck and floating spars.

Then, having accomplished her errand—destruction—the Fiery Cross slowly steamed back into the harbour of Cienfuegos.

Selecting a position about a quarter of a mile from the shore, and half a mile from the forts, at the mouth of the harbour, the Fiery Cross cast anchor in the Port of Cienfuegos.

The night came on hazy and thick. Shortly before four o'clock a.m., all hands were startled by the sound of a heavy gun, unshotted, out seawards.

Obviously, a signal for a pilot.

Two Spanish gentlemen, however, warm Confederate sympathisers—Don Isuaga and Don Mariana Dias—explained that a Spanish frigate was expected hourly at the port, and it was, doubtless, her signal for a pilot they had heard.

Reassured by this, all hands but the watch, aroused by the sudden boom of the gun, turned again to get a few hours more sleep. The night continued thick and hazy till day began to dawn, and then the mist gave place to a glorious sunshiny morning,

It was seven bells. The captain, his brother Hubert, Captain George, and others, two lieutenants, with the Spanish gentlemen, were reclining on the quarter-deck, sipping their coffee and smoking the choicest cigars Cuba could afford.

The fourth lieutenant was busy superintending that

miserable morning job on board ship—washing down the decks.

“I am glad to hear such good news about coal, Don Mariana,” the rebel commander said. “We can take in a hundred and fifty tons, effect some needful repairs in the engines, and be off again in three days.”

“So soon? We shall be sorry to lose your company. We were thinking, my friend and I, of getting up a ball in your honour.”

“I am afraid, *senor*,” said Captain George, laughing, “we should have a Yankee man-o’-war captain or two favour us with his company at the sail ball, if we were to delay here any considerable time.”

“Ah! bah! you are all safe. We never have Yankee war ships here, and they can never suspect that your vessel has put in. They’ll be cruising about for you all down the Gulf.”

“This will be an awkward place to get you out of, if we were discovered by a ship of superior force. The harbour heads are narrow; but, nevertheless, there is a clear view from seaward, and a vessel lying off and on could keep her eye constantly on one lying at anchor within. Hallo; here comes a big steamer round the north point.”

The words of the young commander seemed really prophetic. Every one started up, and spy glasses were in instant requisition. A flag was flying from the huge peak of the stranger.

“A Danish frigate!” cried Hubert Glynne; “that’s the flag of Denmark, I’m sure.”

The stranger was a large sloop, or rather frigate, heavily armed, and swarming with men. There was nothing neat and man-o’-war like about her upper works—her yards seemed to be anyhow, neither squared by the lifts nor braces. Indeed, it struck more than one that they were disarranged purposely.

She came up slowly at first, but suddenly put on full steam; and they could see from on board the Fiery Cross the foam curling up under her bows.

“That’s no Dane,” said Captain George, slowly and deliberately. “I have cruised about the world a bit in

my time, and have seen enough of war ships to be quite certain that fellow never saw Copenhagen."

"No; she's no Dane," said Stanton Glynne, slowly; "she's a Yankee sloop of war. I know her; she's the Mohican, and carries a heavy armament of 9in. and 11in. guns, and a crew of at least 250 men. She's smelt us out, and now we shall have trouble, I reckon."

The supposed Dane came dashing in at the harbour, saluting the forts as she did so. The inhabitants, aroused by the thunder of the guns, hurried down to the quays and landing places to witness the *dénouement*, for the news had flown like wild-fire that a big Yankee man-of-war had come to seize the audacious little rebel in their port.

On came the war ship, till when within about a hundred and fifty yards from the Confederate cruiser, down came the Danish flag and up went the stars and stripes. The cheer from her crew was answered by the sharp beat of the drum on board the Fiery Cross, as the men flew to quarters. By the demeanour of the enemy, it was fully expected at one time that she was going to attack the little rebel even in the neutral port.

The captain of the Niagara and other Yankee commanders had boldly boasted that they would destroy any rebel privateer wherever they might find her, and would not respect any obligations of neutrality, or allow such a thing to stand in the way.

However, in this case, perhaps, they had a wholesome dread of the guns on the shore forts, which they could see were manned by artillerymen, and all ready for action; for, when within a hundred yards, she suddenly stopped, backed her engines, and took up her position ahead of the Fiery Cross.

It may well be imagined that this arrival was the cause of great excitement, not only on board the rebel, but all over the town. Nine out of ten of the inhabitants were Confederate sympathisers, and accordingly cheers for the little ship and taunts and jeers for the big sloop were the order of the day.

The Mohican was very careful not to drop anchor—had she done so she would have been compelled to

remain for twenty-four hours, should the rebel think fit to leave, or follow in defiance of the guns of the ports.

A boat was shortly seen leaving the Yankee and making for the shore. The two Spanish gentlemen volunteered to go up to the governor's official residence, hear what passed, and come back with the news. In a couple of hours' time they kept their words, and great was the ironical laughter on board the rebel.

Captain Palmer, commander of the Mohican, had gone to the governor, and with amazing Yankee impudence, had informed him that there was a pirate at anchor in the harbour, winding up by asking permission to destroy her. This cool request was of course refused, the governor informing him that all the Great Powers had accorded belligerent rights to the Confederates. He was further informed that it was necessary for the Mohican either to cast anchor or leave the waters of the harbour. In the former case, an interval of twenty-four hours must elapse between the departure of either belligerent; also, that in case of any breach of neutrality, the ports would at once open on the offending party.

The Mohican was by no means willing to cast anchor on these terms, so on the return of her boat, she steamed out to the entrance of the harbour, not more than half a mile from the rebel cruiser, and commenced standing slowly backward and forward.

Meanwhile on board the "pirate," as the Yankee captain had designated her, every preparation was made to repel boarders and defend the ship to the very last extremity. For it was thought quite possible that the audacious Yankee, in defiance of justice and the rights of neutrality might, in his insolence, endeavour to seize the Fiery Cross by a *coup-de-main*.

The crew were inspected, and every man seen to be properly armed and equipped for action. That night an attack was fully expected, and no one felt any inclination for slumber. The men sat about in groups, talking over the expected struggle, each man meaning to do his best against the hated foeman.

The officers gathered on the quarter-deck, engaged in discussing the probability of their being able to beat off

the enemy. Boarding nettings were rigged, ammunition got up, the guns loaded with grape, and no precaution neglected.

Thus the night passed, till nearly two hours after midnight. At that hour, the lieutenant of the watch came down into the cabin, where were assembled the captain and all the officers, and announced that the Mohican was approaching at full speed.

The word was passed round to go to quarters almost in a whisper. Never did men obey an order with greater alacrity. In a few minutes the crew were ranged two deep along the rail, pike men in front, small arms men behind. There was a silence as of the grave.

On came the Yankee, sullenly and slowly, for he had slackened speed, as if looking about for the best place to run into her.

The deck of the Fiery Cross was comparatively dark, for the battle lanterns were by order all kept between deck. But on board the Mohican there was abundant light, and the Confederates could make out her crew at their quarters, the guns run out, and everything ready for action.

For some reason or other, however, she seemed to think better of it, for when within about seventy yards the deep tone of the bell was heard as it rang out the "stop her," and a moment afterwards the order to back the engines.

By her own momentum, however, she came on till within less than a ship's length, and then slowly backed away.

All night long the men lay at their guns, with their arms beside them, ready to start up at their post at a moment's notice. It was perhaps this attitude of the rebel crew which caused the enemy to sheer off. Perhaps she thought to find her expected prize unprepared, and hoped by a sudden dash to seize her, and carry her out of the harbour before an alarm could be given to the forts.

As the rebel was prepared, and it was obvious it could only be done after a desperate fight, the idea was relinquished.

A stranger looking along the crowded decks of the Fiery Cross that night, might have thought it was a reckless buccaneer, and not a regular order war-ship of the Confederacy.

All night long the enemy hovered about the entrance to the harbour, but made no further approach to the little steamer. At dawn on the next morning she was seen about half a mile outside the harbour, slowly patrolling to and fro.

The captain of the Confederate cruiser at once despatched a letter on shore to the governor, calling his attention to the flagrant breach of neutrality committed by the enemy during the night, and even at the present moment, for by law he was bound to keep a clear marine league from the shore, or, if he preferred, come in and anchor.

The reply of the governor was not altogether satisfactory. He would interfere by means of the forts in favour of the Confederate vessel if the enemy attempted any attack in the harbour or within the league from the shore. Also, if she came to an anchor, he would take care that the Fiery Cross had a start of twenty-four hours, according to law, if her captain elected to go out first. But so long as the enemy did not attempt any outrage, and did not come to an anchor, he could do nothing.

This was how affairs stood.

The Mohican still keeping cruising about close to the mouth of, and sometimes entirely within the harbour; there was nothing for it but to wait an opportunity, and meanwhile proceed with coaling the ship and making some necessary repairs in the engines. Fortunately, too, at this time, several defective plates were discovered in the boilers, and as at times it might be necessary to carry a tremendous pressure of steam, these could not be neglected. Now was an excellent opportunity for repairing them. As it would occupy at least a week, perhaps ten days, there was now an idle time for all hands; the officers went ashore when off duty, and the men, too, were allowed liberty by watches. There was no longer any fear of an attack by the Mohican so long as they lay in the harbour of Cienfuegos, for the governor had dis-

tinctly notified to the Yankee captain that on the slightest infringement of neutrality he would open fire upon him. In proof of his earnestness, he had caused several more heavy guns to be mounted in such a position as to command the whole of the harbour.

Under these circumstances, the order of the day was to make merry, and trust to skill and fortune to extricate the vessel from her somewhat ticklish fix.

The Fiery Cross was hauled nearer in to the shore, and her topgallant masts sent down as if she meant to make a prolonged stay. All this must have been very annoying to the Yankee, who was compelled to keep under steam night and day, thereby using up his coal at a considerable rate. In reply to a request for a further supply, the governor replied that he might have as much as he pleased if he chose to come in and anchor.

This, however, the Federal declined, as, had he done so, he would have been compelled to remain twenty-four hours after his quarry, should the latter choose to start.

So the officers and crew of the rebel privateer made the best of it. When the boiler-plates were repaired, there would be time enough to devise a plan for getting to sea, and eluding the strict blockade kept over them. Some among the officers and a large number of the crew were for boldly going out and giving the enemy battle. But though, if there was no other alternative, Captain Glynne was willing to submit to that bloody ordeal, it would have been madness on his part to have sought an encounter with a vessel so immeasurably superior as the Mohican—larger crew, larger and stronger ship, built expressly for a man-of-war, which the little rebel was not ; a much heavier armament, of 9, 10, and 11-inch shell guns, whereas the Fiery Cross had only one 8-inch. The one solitary advantage the latter possessed was her speed. But that seemed likely to prove of little use since she could not get out without passing within half a mile or so of the enemy, at which distance she would be sunk almost to a certainty.

However, there is a saying, "Fortune favours the brave," and often was this quoted laughingly again and

again at the wind up of a fruitless discussion as to how the escape was to be effected.

There was, probably, not a man on board who did not thoroughly believe in the good star of the little "Cross," and feel confident that somehow or other the Yankee would be circumvented.

The most annoying part of the whole affair, however, was the conduct of some Yankee schooners and brigs in the harbour, and also the American Consul, whose house, conspicuous by the stars and stripes waving over it, stood on an eminence, and commanded a view both of the harbour and the sea beyond. The schooners kept up constant communication with the enemy by signals in the day time, and boats were constantly passing to and fro.

But the American Consul's plan was far more serious. It was believed that some boats which were hovering around the little steamer all night were employed by him.

Certain it is that from the windows of his house on the hill frequent signals were exchanged between himself and the Mohican by means of the lights.

There was little doubt that an elaborate code had been arranged, but though many attempts were made to decipher it so as to counteract its evil effects, when the eventful moment for making the attempt came, it was all in vain.

The officers of the rebel cruiser were fêted and lionized to their hearts' content. They were cheered in the streets, and ladies waved their handkerchiefs to them from balconies, to the bitter mortification of the Yankee officers, who were treated more as enemies than neutrals.

All this was very galling to the Federals. To see their hated foes, whom they called pirates, treated as heroes, and received with every mark of sympathy and admiration into the best society of the island, was more than they could bear.

Vain, however, were their determined threats. The rebel craft lay quietly at her moorings, safe under the guns of the forts, while the Mohican was compelled to cruise about outside the harbour, the officers getting only an occasional run ashore, while the rebels were

enjoying themselves to the top of their bent—heroes of the day.

It was well it was an impossibility for the crew of the sloop to have liberty for shore, or there would to a certainty have been fights and riots in the town. As it was, when the officers of the rival vessels passed each other black looks were exchanged, and often enough hands would incontinently seek sword handles.

The Confederate officers were overwhelmed with invitations to balls and parties by the hospitable Spaniards, at which the ladies vied one with the other in bestowing their favours on the gallant rebels.

CHAPTER XI.

EVENTS AT THE BALL.

EXACTLY a week and a day after the morning on which the Mohican steamed so unexpectedly into the harbour of Cienfuegos all the officers of the Fiery Cross received invitations to a grand entertainment at the house of Don José Isuaga.

The repairs to the boiler were now all but complete that very day would see everything needful completed and the spiteful little cruiser would again be ready for sea. But, like a huge watch dog, the Mohican prowled up and down outside. The nights hitherto had been provokingly clear, nor did there seem much likelihood, at present, of the much wished for thick and heavy weather.

However, it was determined that when all was in readiness, the first possible opportunity should be seized for the attempt, and that when there came a night only a little hazy the vessel should dart out and endeavour to run past her huge antagonist.

The ball was a brilliant affair. All the beauty and wealth of the town was there, congregated to do honour to the gallant little band of Confederates, for such was the avowed object of the hospitable giver. Hubert Glynne, his brother, Captain George, and all the other officers and midshipmen were present, the great majority in uniform; Hubert's friends, who had come on board with him at Lake Pontchartrain, not being provided with uniform, were in plain evening dress, for the most part, though some were in military garb.

That afternoon a great event had occurred. The Captain-General of Cuba had arrived quite unexpectedly from Havannah. He had been informed of the presence of the Confederate vessel in the harbour, and the prowling of the Yankee outside. He had come to satisfy himself on the actual state of affairs.

Although he was known to be in the town, it was not

anticipated that he would honour the assembly of Don José.

When, therefore, His Excellency the Vice-Regent of her Majesty Queen Isabella of Spain was announced, the sensation was profound, and dancing and conversation alike suddenly ceased.

Don José hastened to receive his distinguished guest, and conducted him deferentially into the superbly decorated ball-room.

Then they advanced to where stood a group of Confederate officers around Hubert and Stanton Glynne, their young commander.

"Your Excellency," said Don José, "allow me to present to you my very good friend, Captain Stanton Glynne, commander of the Confederate ship of war now in this port."

Stanton came forward, bowed, and was cordially shaken hands with by the Captain-General, who was a strong Confederate sympathiser, as indeed were nearly all Spaniards.

Then the worthy host turned to Hubert Glynne, and proceeded to introduce him in turn.

"The commander's brother, your Excellency, captain of marines on board the steamer."

Hubert seemed in a trance. From the moment the Captain-General advanced towards him, his eyes had been riveted on his face. When he heard his voice he started, and asked himself was he not labouring under some delusion?

Those features—that voice—seemed perfectly familiar to him. Where had he seen them before? Where had he heard that deep musical voice?

Vainly he asked himself the question, and was ransacking the inmost recesses of his memory, when Captain George, who stood beside him, touched his elbow sharply, for the Captain-General of Cuba was waiting, with a quiet smile on his face at the young officer's abstraction, a smile which faded away instantly, and gave place to the habitual expression of deep melancholy.

Hubert Glynne coloured up, and apologized for his apparent rudeness,

"It is no matter, *senor*. I can well understand that you, in common with all Southerners who love their country, have food for deep and earnest thought."

Again that voice. Its tones were perfectly familiar, but where, when had he heard it before? As the Captain-General turned on one side to speak to some one else he turned his profile towards him. The young Southerner again gave an involuntary start. Where and when had he seen that face? So long as the Captain-General was in the room Hubert never removed his eyes from him. He watched his every motion, as though by doing so he might penetrate the mystery which confounded him. When his Excellency had taken his leave, Hubert sought out Don José and questioned him about his late distinguished guest.

"Who is he? what is he?" said the worthy Don, in some surprise; "why, the Captain-General of the Island of Cuba, and Vice-Regent of her Majesty Queen Isabella of Spain."

"Yes, yes; but his name; what was he before? I want his history?"

"You seem extremely anxious, my friend," said Don José, looking at him as though he doubted whether he were quite sane.

"I am anxious, worried, excited. That man's face and voice are perfectly familiar to me. I have seen him somewhere; have known him somewhere, but for the life of me cannot tell where or when."

"He has been for many years in Cuba, for some years Captain-General, and before that he held high office. He has always been in high office at Court, nay, not always; there was a time when he was calumniated, and had to go home to the Court of Madrid to vindicate his honour. It was all an intrigue, prompted by a woman's furious jealousy, they say. Ah! he was served a cruel trick during his absence! a bitter, cruel trick it was. Poor gentleman, he smiles sometimes, but they say he has never been known to laugh since that time. Well I remember what a hubbub there was; what enormous rewards were offered for the discovery of the offender; all in vain, for from that day to this the Don has never

been able to recover his lost children, even to hear of them or know their fate. They were kidnapped from his house in the night. That is all that is certainly known."

"And was there no clue? no means of tracing the guilty parties?" asked Hubert.

"None whatever. Suspicions there have been in abundance, and they, alas! point near his own hearth. The Captain-General had been twice married. These kidnapped children were by his first wife. The second, a proud, haughty dame, daughter of old Castille, with blood as blue as indigo, was never partial to the children. People hint a great deal, but say little. It is a dangerous subject."

"But where have I seen this Captain-General? Good senor, if you would do me a favour, aid me in solving this problem."

"My dear friend, how can I aid you?"

"Has he ever been in New Orleans, or anywhere in the Southern States?"

"Not that I am aware of; I think not," was the reply.

"Or in the Northern States—New York, Boston, Washington—anywhere I could have met him?"

"Again I reply, I think not. But surely, if you had met him, you would have remembered when and where. He is a remarkably handsome man; not one whose face and figure you would easily forget."

"One would think not; and yet I do forget. Or can it be that this is one of those mysterious reminiscences which some philosophers attribute to our having passed through a previous state of existence? It would really seem so. That man's face and voice are so familiar to me; the voice, though, seems to me to be deeper, gruffer than when I remember it. Oh, this is torturing! I wish I had not come here to-night at all. I shall be puzzling over this mystery for days, ay, and for sleepless nights, too."

Meanwhile the dance went on, and as the wine flowed and the soft strains of the music fell on the ears of the assembled company, hearts warmed and tongues were unloosed.

Our friend Captain George, had not danced. It was

now getting late in the evening, so he resolved to seek out a partner.

"I'll have the handsomest in the room," he said, laughingly, to Stanton Glynne, "as true as I'm an Englishman."

"The deuce you will. I'll bet you half a dozen on that," was the laughing reply.

"Done."

"Done."

"There she stands," said the young commander, pointing to a tall, dark young lady with luxuriant brown hair—not black, like that of the majority of the ladies present—"that's the handsomest girl in the room, to my taste. Come, my worthy lieutenant, prove your mettle, and win the wine. I've observed her refuse half a dozen at least."

Captain George was intently regarding the lady in question. Surprise, doubt, uncertainty were expressed on his features.

"By Jove! it can't be—and yet—yes, it is."

"What on earth are you mumbling about—some mystic spell or love charm?" asked Stanton Glynne.

At that moment the young lady turned her head, and they had a good view of her face—an exceedingly lovely one.

"'Tis she!" cried the Englishman, excitedly, and walked quickly towards her.

"'Tis she!" said Stanton Glynne, looking after him. "What on earth does the fellow mean? Is he mad, I wonder?"

But Captain George walked straight up to the young lady, who stared at him in surprise.

CHAPTER XII.

JULIANA CORDOVA.

JULIANA ! " said our hero.

She looked hard, as if scarcely able to believe her eyes.

"Do you not know me ?—have five years made such a difference ?"

Then she sprang forward and seized his hand.

"Now I know you. I knew your voice in a moment; and now I look, I recognise your face. Ah, my dear, dear friend, you have altered greatly."

"How. Not for the worse, I hope."

"No; but you are different. You look sterner and fiercer; then you have a long scar on your forehead, and a mark on your chin; and you are ever so much more swarthy, and—and——"

"Altogether older and uglier," he said, laughing.

"No, not that. I am sure the scars do not disfigure you a bit, nor do you look older; but you seem so much sterner—more severe than you used to be."

"Ah, well, Julie," he said, "I have had rough time of it these five years past. I have had some hard knocks, and been through a great deal, I can assure you."

"Your own fault, your own fault. You yourself told me years ago that you could live at home in ease and comfort in happy England, if you chose. Why don't you?"

"A restless spirit and an aching heart, Julie, are the only excuses I can plead."

"Ah! let us come somewhere where we can have a long talk; I have so much to tell you—sad news—bad news. I am an orphan now."

"Presently, Julie. We will dance first."

Placing his arm round her waist, he whirled her off, and continued to pass close to Stanton Glynne.

He nodded, and gave a smile of triumph as he did so.

Stanton laughed, and said to himself, "Confound that Englishman! he's a devil of a fellow. Fighting, drink-

ing, spreeing, or love-making—all seems to come alike to him. He seems to be on excellent terms with the girl."

We will follow these two, who, after a separation of five years, have again met.

"And now tell me of all your adventures since last we met, Senor Englishman?"

Captain George laughed.

"It would take me a great many hours, Senorita Espanola," he replied; "and, I fear, you would be tired before I had finished. I observe you have not forgotten your English?"

"Ah, no; I had a very pleasant master, and I have not forgotten his lessons."

"You flatter me, Juliana."

"I flatter? Ah, you know me better than that."

"Well, well, then, I gratefully accept the compliment. Now tell me of yourself."

"Alas! I have little to tell. Three years ago my dear mamma died, and I was left an orphan; then I came to live here with mamma's sister, who is married, in this town."

"To some Spanish grandee, I suppose?"

"Oh, no! I wish she were."

"To whom then is she married?"

"To Mr. Enoch Allen, the American Consul; and so you see that partly accounts for my speaking such excellent English. I have been with them for two years now."

"The American Consul!" cried Captain George, aghast. "Then you must not be seen speaking to me."

"Not speak to you!" the girl cried, passionately; "but I will speak to you, that is, if you will allow. Who dare prevent me, I should like to know? Did you not save my life at the imminent peril of your own? Not speak to you, indeed! Ah! Senor Englishman, you little know Juliana Cordova. Do you remember that afternoon when, lured by the beauty of the evening, I strolled away from the sea-shore on the north side of the bay, where was the pleasure boat in which we had come, full a mile up among the orange-groves? Do you remember who it was, when I was seized by a gang of ferocious

runaway slaves, heard my screams, and rescued me—shooting two—not without receiving a wound from a knife himself? Ah, I remember! The wound was just below the elbow, here, on the left arm. I can put my finger on it, Senor Englishman.”

And as she spoke, she laid her fair hand on his left arm on the exact spot where, five years previously, he had received a desperate knife wound in her defence.

“Juliana, I will not dispute the excellence of your memory, but nevertheless, I repeat that your uncle, the consul, would be desperately angry if he knew you spoke to me.”

“Why so?”

“Is he not our mortal foe? Is he not every night making signals from his house, in order to compass the destruction of myself, all my brave comrades, and our ship?”

“Ship?”

“Yes; do you not observe the uniform I wear? Do you not know that I am the first lieutenant of the Fiery Cross, the Confederate war steamer, now blockaded in this port by the Yankee steam-sloop, *Mohican*?”

“Ah! now I understand,” she said. “I did not notice your uniform before. It was you I looked at.”

This was said with the most charming naïvete, and he could not help feeling gratified thereat.

“Well, you see, Julie, why it would never do for you to be seen talking to me—I, being in the service of the Confederate States—your uncle a Northerner”

“But I don’t see anything of the kind,” she cried, passionately. “I hate him, and the Yankees, and his signals from the windows, and all the rest of it. I will destroy them all some day, just for spite.”

“I wish she would,” thought Captain George, “and on the very evening we make a dash out. It would be a devil of a sell for our friend, Enoch Allen.”

“And, besides,” the young lady went on, “I am not a child, if I was when you knew me first. I am nearly twenty-one years old, and shall soon have my own property. My aunt’s husband knows I don’t like him, and he doesn’t like me. But I shall be rich soon—and I

know right well he is looking after the dollars. Ah! dear, I wish I had some one to take care of me!"

Surely there never was such an unsophisticated child of nature as this!

"And so you are not happy, little Julie?"

"Not happy. I don't think I am unhappy. I wish I had not seen you to-night," she broke in, all at once; "and why do you call me little Julie?"

"I beg your pardon, I hope I have not offended you?"

"Don't beg my pardon, and don't talk to me like that. *Caramba!* you make me angry. Why don't you speak to me as you used to long, long ago?"

"You were a child then, Julie."

"I wish I were a child now, then," she said, petulantly.

"Well, well; I will do anything you please. Don't let us fall out now we have not seen each other for five long years, and perhaps after to-night we may never see each other again."

"You will not come on shore, then, any more from this ship of yours?"

"I hope so, Julie; but we may sail to-morrow—at any hour, in fact."

"But there is that great Yankee ship that is always signalling, marching backwards and forwards outside the harbour."

"We will avoid the Yankee if possible; if not, we must fight. We can't stop here for ever, that's certain."

"Ah! you will fight, and he will sink and kill you all. Why can't you stop on shore and let these Southern Americans fight themselves with the Northern Americans. You are neither; you are an Englishman."

"I am not a coward, as you know, Julie; and you should know that, having joined the ship, I cannot desert my colours."

"Ah! Well, I am only a girl; I don't understand these things, but to me for men to shoot at each other with great cannons seems both cruel and wicked."

"I daresay you are right, Juliana, but this is a wicked world. You may depend that the reign of perpetual peace will never come so long as human nature is what it is. So long as men are avaricious, ambitious, revenge-

ful and envious, so long will there be wars and rumours of wars. I must leave you now, Julie. See, my companions are all leaving."

"Shall I see you again?" she asked.

"I shall be on shore to-morrow, and every day until we put to sea."

"Ah! I take a walk through the flower market always about eleven in the forenoon, and again about four I go out."

"I will be there if possible; for the present, adieu. She is very beautiful, very charming," he said, "and—and—ah! well, it may be only my vanity and conceit. At any rate, it is useless my thinking on the subject. Sweet Juliana, how handsome she has grown!"

And all that night, on board the Fiery Cross, awake he thought, asleep he dreamed, of Juliana Cordova.

CHAPTER XIII.

CAPTAIN GEORGE GETS A FAIR ALLY.

NOT all at once, but gradually, a plan unfolded itself to the mind of the English lieutenant of the Confederate steamer—a plan by which he thought it possible to elude the close blockade maintained by the enemy.

For the present he resolved, however, to keep it to himself, preferring to make all the necessary arrangements before even confiding it to the captain.

So on the following morning he went on shore, not in uniform (for that would have proclaimed who and what he was), but in mufti.

In reply to Stanton Glynne's question as to his purpose, when he asked for permission to go ashore at all hours and remain as long as he pleased, he merely said he had an idea which he thought might prove very serviceable.

The young commander, who had great faith in the judgment of his lieutenant, at once consented, and so Captain George was invested with a sort of roving commission.

On going ashore, he first of all made his way to the market, and strolled about there until he met Juliana Cordova.

That young lady welcomed him with her brightest smiles, and the pair walked together about the town for some hours.

Captain George employed the time in improving his acquaintance with the city, more especially that portion of the suburbs which commanded a view of the harbour and sea.

On taking leave of his fair companion, he appointed to meet her again in the evening, and proceeded for the rest of the day with his investigations alone.

By the time the hour had come for him to keep his

assignation with the lovely Juliana, he had rendered himself familiar with all the roads and the neighbourhood of the United States Consulate, which, as we have before stated, commanded an excellent view of the harbour and the ocean beyond.

Standing half-way up the eminence, on which the residence of the Yankee Consul was situate, he could command an excellent view of the harbour and the open water outside.

He could see his own vessel as she lay at anchor near the shore, and then allowing his eye to wander seaward, he could discern the enemy's ship, the *Mohican*, doggedly patrolling backwards and forwards, never going more than half a mile either way from the centre of the harbour mouth.

Every hour or so a series of flags fluttered up to her peak. The patient observer noticed that these flags were always the same, and in the same order.

On this he reasoned as follows : " It is always the same signal she makes. Probably, then, it is a question. Now although I from my position here can see both vessels, it is certain that the Fiery Cross is concealed from the view of those on board the *Mohican*. Her captain, then, has arranged a code of signals with some person on shore who can keep the Confederate constantly in sight. That person, I think probable, is the Yankee Consul ; or, at all events, some one at his house. The question so constantly asked by means of the signal flags is somewhat to this effect—' Is the enemy still at anchor ? '—and so long as such is the case, the answer is, of course, ' Yes.' Now I must watch the American Consulate closely."

And having come to this conclusion, the Englishman selected a suitable spot, lit a cigar, and remained with eyes steadily fixed on the house on the hill, allowing his glance to wander now and again to the Yankee ship in the offing.

When the signal flags flew to her peak, his gaze on the house became more earnest, in hopes of spying out the answering signal he so strongly suspected would be made.

But although there were two flagstaffs on the roof of the American Consulate, no signal, as far as he could discover, was made from either.

The Federal ensign, the stars and stripes, floated from one, while the other remained constantly bare, not a rag of bunting being displayed from it.

The house faced the south, and every window was furnished with green jealousies, to keep out the glare of the sun, from which at no period of the day was it free. Most of these blinds were kept constantly down, but there were two at the eastern wing of the building which had the green blinds up.

There was nothing very remarkable in this, though it produced a singular effect, two windows out of some thirty only being unprotected from the sunshine.

All at once, as he gazed, the blinds of these two were let down, first one and then the other, in rapid succession, and almost as quickly run up again.

Of this the Englishman might have taken no notice, but for what followed. Glancing at the Mohican immediately after, he saw the signals were flying from her peak, and as he gazed were hauled down.

"Her signal has been answered," was the first thought which flashed through the watcher's mind.

The second was.

"The lowering and raising of those blinds again was the reply."

Hitherto he had been constantly watching the flagstaff, and his attention had not been directed to the windows.

Now he reversed it, and closely watched them until the Mohican, in the course of half an hour, again came to the same spot in her cruising to and fro. As he expected, up flew the signals.

"There she goes," muttered the Englishman to himself; "that means, 'What of the pirate?—is she still at anchor?' And, by Jupiter, there goes the answer!"

As before, the blinds of the two windows were rapidly lowered—first one and then the other—and in a second or two raised again.

"So far, so good. I am now aware of part of their

day code; their system of night telegraphy may give me more trouble."

He watched the same manœuvre two or three times more, and noticed that the blinds of the window farthest to the eastward was always lowered and raised first.

That fact he made a note of, and also the flags the Mohican hoisted at her peak.

When he had done this, he thought it nearly time for him to be at the appointed rendezvous with the fair Spaniard.

"Julie," he said, "that's a fine handsome house of your uncle's; but is it not a pity it should face the south, and be thus exposed to the full glare of the sun?"

"It has its inconvenience," she replied; "but by no other arrangement could so fine a view be commanded of sea and harbour. I suppose Allen, as a consul, saw the advantage of a good view of all shipping entering and leaving the harbour."

"Which portion of the house does he occupy?"

"The eastern wing; where also are situate the public office and the private rooms of himself and his secretary."

"Who is the secretary—a Yankee, I presume?"

"His nephew—John Allen by name, from whom this very afternoon I have had the greatest difficulty in escaping. He was most pressing with his offer of accompanying me on my walk, and from the closeness with which he questioned me, I almost fancied he suspected something."

"He is, then, an admirer of yours, fair Julie?"

"I don't know whether it is myself, or the fortune I have, he admires; but he certainly is most persistent in his attentions."

"And do you receive these attentions?"

"For the sake of peace I receive them quietly, neither inviting or repelling them. I must remain under the care of my aunt until I am of age; and her husband, Enoch Allen, fancies that I am willing to take his nephew as my future husband. He has often spoken to me on the point, and urged on me the young fellow's many virtues and good qualifications—the greatest of which is,

in his eyes, that John Allen is a hard plodding man of business—mean and parsimonious to an excess.”

“And what are your sentiments with regard to the gentleman?” Captain George went on to ask.

She looked at him steadfastly, and there was something of reproach in her glance and the tones of her voice when she spoke, as if to say, “You must be blind indeed, if you cannot guess.”

Aloud, she said, “I would sooner die than wed with Enoch Allen’s nephew.”

“I believe you, dear Julie,” he said, tenderly. “I must say that I should deeply regret to see you the wife of a Yankee.”

Again her look seemed to say, “And is that all? Could you be content to see me the wife of the gallantest Confederate, or of any one but yourself?”

However, Captain George at this time was not bent on love-making. He had other fish to fry, and though by no means insensible to the charms of Juliana, nor her obvious preference for himself, he determined to devote all his energies to circumventing the commander of the Yankee cruiser and the American Consul, who, together, laboured so incessantly for the destruction of the Fiery Cross.

“Juliana,” he said, presently, “I will deal frankly with you. Our enemies have resolved on the destruction of our gallant little ship. We are hemmed in on every side, and it really seems but too probable that they may succeed. The sloop-of-war, Mohican, constantly patrols up and down outside the mouth of the harbour, paying not the slightest regard to neutral rights. She is more than double our size, carries a larger crew, a heavier armament, and, altogether, more than a match for the little Fiery Cross. We shall fight if absolutely compelled to, but there can be but little doubt as to the result of so unequal a conflict. It would end in the slaughter of our men and the destruction of the vessel. It is my object to prevent this, and enable the Fiery Cross to elude her enemy and escape to sea without a fight. Our vessel is closely watched night and day, and her every movement reported to the enemy by signals from the shore. I have

discovered whence these signals proceed, and am now engaged in deciphering them. I have no doubt but that a perfect code is arranged thus, that if the Fiery Cross gets under way, no matter how silently, that it would be immediately communicated to the Mohican, and even the direction in which she was going. This latter would render it almost impossible to get out. I fully believe that the signals are made from your uncle's house. And this very night our vessel will make a feint of running out, in order that I may observe these signals and be prepared to counteract them when the attempt is really made. Each day we remain here increases our danger. At any time others of the enemy's vessels may arrive, and whereas it is a matter of great difficulty to escape under any circumstances, it would be an absolute impossibility when blockaded by two or more vessels, in place of one as at present."

Juliana reflected seriously for some time before making a reply.

"I confess," she said, presently, "I have had some difficulty in deciding. You ask me to aid you, to be a spy on my relative in his own house."

"There is no dishonour in spying on a spy, any more than there is crime in killing a murderer under circumstances when the law is powerless."

"I grant there is strength in your argument, but not enough to satisfy me."

"Then you refuse?" said Captain George, sadly. "Alas! for the poor vessel. I have thought deeply on the matter, and have come to the conviction that success can only be ensured by means of the aid of some one within the house. Since, however, you decline we must do the best we can."

He spoke in accents of bitter disappointment. He had calculated that Juliana would give her best assistance; and it showed that he had overrated his power.

"My dear friend, you are in too great a hurry. Listen till I have finished what I have to say. I said, the argument you used about spying on the spy had some strength, but not enough for me. But you used a much more powerful argument before."

Captain George brightened up at this, but did not again interrupt her.

"You spoke of the chances of a battle between your vessel and that of the enemy; in which case the result would be the slaughter of your men and the destruction of your ship. Years ago you saved me from outrage and insult—perhaps saved my life. A Spanish girl does not lightly forget a service of that kind; and Juliana Cordova is not ungrateful."

"Dear Julie," cried Captain George, "I know it. You have sufficiently proved it; your present condescension and kindness to me—a poor adventurer, a soldier and sailor of fortune—convinces me of that."

Juliana went on.

"I could not bear the thought of seeing you lying maimed, bleeding, perhaps dying, on the deck of your doomed vessel in a conflict which I might possibly enable you to avoid at the price of domestic treason. But to save you from danger I would pay even a higher price. I attach one condition, however, to my assistance. Grant that, and I am yours to command, heart and soul."

"Name it."

"It is this, that on the night when the attempt is made, you will remain on shore."

"But Julie—if successful, I should in that case be left behind."

"And if unsuccessful, you would escape the danger of the conflict."

Captain George made a wry face. Evidently he was averse to the idea of not sharing the peril of his comrades.

But Juliana was firm.

"Either that, or nothing," she said. "I will not assist you or give you any information whatever, unless you promise me, on your word of honour, that on the eventful night you will remain on shore."

"But, Juliana, that amounts to deserting my ship. I am first lieutenant of the *Fiery Cross*. It would be disgraceful, indeed, were I not at my post in the hour of danger."

"Your post, sir Englishman, is where you can do the

most effective service to your ship, and the cause you serve in the hour of danger. Ask yourself the question, how can you do the best service, by remaining and aiding me to do what you want, and so enabling the vessel to elude and hoodwink the enemy by means of false signals, which I am to work—you see I have sufficient penetration to guess the nature of your proposal—or to remain on board, and, as a consequence, lose the assistance of a faithful friend?"

"Juliana, you are, indeed, a sophist. I did not give you credit for so much art."

"Do you consent to my terms?"

"How can I join my ship again?"

"Arrange for her to run into this or some neighbouring port at a time when there is no enemy about, Havannah, for instance. I shall be there next month."

Though a good deal annoyed, Captain George was a little flattered at the fair Spaniard's considerations for his safety. Under all the circumstances, he could do nothing but yield.

"Julie, I accept your terms."

"Then I am your devoted friend, ally, and——"

She checked herself, and colouring up a little, went on.

"What I mean is this—that to facilitate the escape of your vessel without a sanguinary conflict, I will do all a girl may do without dishonour."

"It cannot be dishonourable, Julie, to aid the weak against the strong."

"I am content to believe so. For your sake, I am willing to act a treasonable part to the man under whose roof I am now living."

"A thousand thanks, dear Julie; but use not that hated word, treasonable. It is our enemies who are treasonable. In defiance of justice and the law of nations, a Yankee vessel of far superior force cruises close outside the harbour, treating with contempt the stipulation as to keeping more than a marine league from neutral land. We are spied on night and day; endeavours are constantly made to suborn our men from their allegiance, and induce them to desert; these and a thousand other

mean acts are used against us by the bloodthirsty and unscrupulous enemy."

"The enemy—the enemy! Why do you say the enemy? You are an Englishman, and as such have no quarrel with the United States."

"I have espoused the cause of the Confederacy. I have fought in more than one battle by land and sea, against Federal sailors and soldiers. Dear friends of mine—notably the brave and gallant Darcy Leigh—have fallen in the same cause; and so long as a Confederate army is in the field, I will fight on, prepared to fall also."

Juliana Cordova said no more to urge him to relinquish entirely the career he had chosen. She saw it would be useless by his manner and bearing.

"Well," she said, with a sigh, "a wilful man must have his way. I can only pray to the Virgin and all the saints to watch over and guard you, and that this cruel and disastrous conflict may ere long be brought to an end."

"To a happy end, by the triumph of the Confederacy," he said, warmly.

"I will confess that I would prefer to see the contest thus settled; but I fear greatly such will not be the result. The Southerners under-rate the power and resources of the North. There are three things which, combined, must give the victory ultimately to the Federals. The first is their naval supremacy. One by one they take all your maritime towns, and maintain an efficient blockade."

"I grant that is a very serious matter," he said, "but not fatal. What next?"

"The next thing is the question of slavery. Among civilized nations there are only the Confederacy and my own country—Spain—which uphold the system. It cannot long be continued against the feeling of the world. On this point Spain must some day yield. I am not one of those who hold that negroes are fit for freedom; on the contrary, I believe that as an inferior race it is right they should occupy an inferior position; and, furthermore, I believe they are happier as slaves than they would be as free men. But, as I said before, the feeling of the world, and of England especially, is against the system. For the Confederacy to free the slaves would be an act

of sound wisdom, and would take a powerful weapon from the hand of the enemy."

"I agree with you thoroughly there; but as the Confederates refused to free their slaves at the dictation of the Yankees, there is nothing for it but to fight it out on the present principles. And now let me hear the last thing which militates against the success of the cause I have embraced."

"That is the one thing which, if the so-called rebels are ultimately defeated, will prove fatal. It is the constant influx of emigrant thousands weekly from Europe, a great number of whom, tempted by the bounty, enter the Federal army. Thus, while your men are dying and being killed by hundreds, and with no means of replenishing the population, your gigantic enemy gets a constant supply of new blood. It seems to me that if you are not supported by some other Power, or the tide of immigration into the Northern stopped, it can only be a question of time. I grant that Southern armies may fight and conquer while they last, but what of the time when war shall have done its work and there are no soldiers to fill the fast thinning ranks? Then will come the end—the fall of the Confederacy."

"If it must be so, it must; meanwhile we must fight on. Though England has not embraced the side of the South openly, the sympathies of most Englishmen are with the gallant Confederates; and here stands one Englishman who is prepared to risk all—liberty and life—in defence of the flag with the starry cross."

Juliana well knew that to attempt to persuade him to relinquish his intention was a hopeless task at present, so contented herself as best she might with the thought that she was about to render efficient aid and to save from danger one in whom her heart was deeply interested.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE PLAN TO DEFEAT THE YANKEE SIGNALS.

THE first lieutenant of the rebel privateer, having now secured so efficient an ally, went to work with renewed hope and confidence.

He arranged with Juliana that on the night she should keep a vigilant look-out within the house, and make herself mistress of all possible particulars as to how the signalling was conducted, and by whom. He himself would keep vigilant watch without, and at the appointed hour the Fiery Cross would slip her cable and steam out of the harbour, with her head to the west, as if she were going to run in that direction. The moment would be chosen when the enemy was at the eastern end of his beat and at the nearest point to the house of the Yankee Consul. As this was only a feint, she would double back into the harbour immediately the signals notifying that she was under way, and the others indicating her direction had been given. All that would be attempted that night would be to ascertain what were the signals given when she stood to the westward. On another occasion the like would be done to the eastward.

Precisely at eleven o'clock of a moonless, though otherwise clear night, the daring little rebel steamer slipped her cable and dashed ahead for the entrance to the harbour at full speed.

So much on the *qui vive* were the townspeople, that the vessel had scarcely moved twenty yards when a loud shout rent the air, and there was a confusion all along the quays as though Babel were let loose. In the course of a minute a rocket was sent up from a Yankee merchant schooner, and this was followed by two blue lights being burned from another Northern vessel in the port.

Captain George was posted within a quarter of a mile of the Consul's house, and directly in front. The instant the rocket shot up he knew that the feint was being made, and kept all his faculties about him. First there blazed up two blue lights out at sea, distant about half a mile from the shore. This was the Mohican, and he read it to mean—

“Which way is the rebel heading?”

Our friend now directed his keenest attention to the Consulate, where not a light was visible at the time the rocket shot up in the air.

There was a pause of some two or three minutes—perhaps five—and then the Englishman saw two blue lights, one at the head the other at the stern of a Yankee schooner, going direct to the mouth of the harbour.

“Two blue lights from that schooner, one forward, the other aft. That is to convey to the signalman at the Consul's that the rebel is heading to the west—for so it was arranged she should. Now we shall see how the Consul communicates that intelligence to the Mohican.”

He had not long to wait, for immediately after the appearance of the blue lights on the schooner in the harbour, three windows of the Consul's house were suddenly illuminated, as though the blinds had been drawn up and a bright light placed in each.

It may be imagined that the Englishman closely watched all that followed, and took care to remember.

Suddenly one of the lights went out, that in the easternmost of the three windows, then the centre one, and lastly the one farthest to the west.

“So, so,” said Captain George to himself, “I think I understand. I know that our vessel is going to the westward, and I observe that this row of lights is extinguished from east to west, or in the same direction as the ship is going. It is plain enough, the Yankee schooner in the harbour displays two blue lights: one at her head, and one at her stern. That conveys the information to the house on the hill as to the course taken. Then our worthy friend the Consul being thus apprised of the direction in which she is steaming, hastens to communicate it to the Mohican. That is all plain

enough. I have now to ascertain how he will telegraph the fact if she steers to the eastward. That must be ascertained by another feint to be made to-morrow night."

Satisfied so far with the progress he had made, our friend watched for another half hour, at the expiration of which time another rocket was sent up from the harbour.

This he judged was to inform the Yankee ship, and also the Consul, that the rebel had returned to her place.

He knew that by this time such must be the case, and hastening down to the quay, he was put on board the Fiery Cross, which again lay quietly at her moorings, having caused the enemy a false alarm, and served the end of Captain George.

A council was immediately called, and soon all the officers were assembled round the cabin table.

The first lieutenant was called upon to report on the success of his plans so far.

"I am glad to be able to report, Captain Glynne and gentlemen, that I have succeeded in obtaining the information I wished. I have discovered the signal, which is from the United States Consulate, made in the event of our making a dash from out of the harbour, and steering to the westward close under the shadow of the high land, as was the case on this occasion. It now remains to ascertain the nature of the signals made in case the steamer is steered to the eastward. I imagine that can be ascertained in the same manner to-morrow night. That done, it will remain to utilize the information gained. I propose to do this by means of false lights displayed from the Consul's house. As to the best means by which I hope to compass this, I cannot say, for I at present do not know, nor should I be at liberty to divulge more, as another will be concerned with me in the attempt, for the sake of whom I am compelled to remain silent on the point. I have every hope of success, and nothing shall be wanting on my part to ensure it."

This statement was well received by all present.

Hubert Glynne, Captain of the Marines, said—

“I wish to ask whether my friend and comrade, Captain George, has any objection to lay before the council his plan, not for displaying the false lights—that we can safely leave to his judgment, prudence, and sagacity—but as to how it is to be made available?”

“Our gallant commander, Captain Glynne, and I have consulted together,” replied the Englishman, “and I would suggest that he should explain the course of action we thought of.”

Thereupon Stanton Glynne rose, and spoke as follows, amidst breathless silence—

“The following, gentlemen, is the plan of action I propose, in order to extricate our little vessel from her present dangerous fix. First, we must learn a little more about the enemy’s method of signalling—get possession of his code, in fact. I am sure that every one of you will agree with me when I say that we cannot possibly do better than leave this delicate and difficult business in the hands of our gallant friend and brother officer, First Lieutenant Captain George, a gentleman who, though not a countryman by birth, is a Southerner to the backbone in heart and sentiment; an officer who has done good service to our cause, on the battle-field by land, and also on the water; for he was the intimate companion and trusted friend of a brave young hero who perished in the cause. I allude to Darcy Leigh. Before proceeding farther in my explanation, I wish again to direct your attention to the brilliant services rendered by First Lieutenant Captain George, an Englishman, an honour to his country, and to any other country. Would to heaven, gentlemen, we had many more such Englishmen in our ranks! Success would be then not problematical, but certain. I trust I may be pardoned for this slight digression.”

Stanton Glynne paused for a while, and the occasion was seized for a warm demonstration in favour of the English lieutenant. Everybody crowded round him, and shook hands with him, and he was the hero of the hour.

Having expressed his thanks for these manifestations

of good feeling and regard, the young commander of the "Very Cross" went on—

"The following gentlemen, is, then, the course which I purpose. It seems to me to offer an excellent chance of success. A moonless night will be chosen—a dark and cloudy one, if possible. The steam will be got up, and at the appointed hour the cable slipped. The time will be chosen when the enemy is as far to the eastward of the harbour mouth as he ever goes, in full view of the Consul's house, where the signals are made; the vessel will be headed straight for the mouth of the harbour, and then will double sharp round to the westward, keeping close under the shadow of the land. Immediately on the attempt being made, a false signal will be displayed from the Consul's house, a signal which will signify that the vessel is being steered to the east. This would be just into the jaws of the enemy, who will be still awaiting his expected prey. He will almost certainly do so, if success crowns the effort of our gallant friend the first lieutenant. Meanwhile, however, our vessel will be tearing through the water at her utmost speed to the westward. Possibly the enemy may catch sight of her, or the smoke from the funnel; but it is not likely he will be able to decide in which direction we are going; on the other hand, it is more probable he will rely upon his signals, and lie still. If he does this for ten minutes, all will be well. In that time, at full speed, we shall have steamed a mile and a half, and there will be a clear two miles or more between us. This will enable us to get round the point, where we shall be screened from view; it is quite likely that, confused by the signals, he will not discern our vessel at all, but will suffer her to get clear off. There is one point of our plan, however, gentlemen, which I doubly regret, and so, doubtless, will all of you when you hear its nature. We shall be compelled to lose for a time our gallant friend the first lieutenant."

Murmurs of surprise arose at this announcement, and Captain Glynne proceeded to explain—

"It is imperatively necessary, the first lieutenant assures me, for the success of his plans, that he himself

should be on shore to superintend the signals to mislead the enemy ; of course, it would be madness to loiter about in this dangerous neighbourhood ; but if we succeed in getting clear off, I have arranged a rendezvous in a month's time if feasible ; if not, in two months, or whenever we can. Lieutenant George will proceed from this port overland to Havannah, where he will await the putting in of the ship. Second Lieutenant Wharncliffe will of course be promoted temporarily, until such time as our gallant friend may be enabled to rejoin us. This, gentlemen, is the plan we have arranged. I trust it will meet your approval."

There was not one dissentient voice ; and after some farther discussion as to details, the council broke up, every one prognosticating success.

On the following night another escapade of the same nature was carried out, only that this time the rebel cruiser steered to the east for a short distance, and then again doubled back. The same process of signalling was carried out, with this difference, that the three lights in the windows were extinguished from west to east, and there was but one blue light burned on board the schooner in the harbour.

The other Yankce vessel, as before, threw up a rocket immediately the Fiery Cross started from her moorings.

This put Captain George in possession of sufficient of the enemy's code of signals to warrant the attempt being made on the first dark night.

On the evening following this second sham attempt to run out, our friend had a long interview with Juliana Cordova.

That young lady carried out her promise to the letter, and proved a most fervent and useful ally.

This was the communication she made to the Englishman as the result of her inquiries :—

"I have discovered a great deal about this signalling business. Mr. Allen and his nephew work it entirely themselves, with the assistance of a lad, a clerk, whose duty is to watch all night for the signals that the Fiery Cross is going to sea. He is relieved from all his other duties for this purpose, and, besides, is promised a hand-

some present if he is vigilant. Either Mr. Allen or his nephew are always at home, ready at a moment's notice to give the necessary signals. When his secretary is away, my uncle invariably remains at home, and John Allen has strict orders not to leave while the other is absent. The signals are displayed at night from the three windows in the large room where the business of the Consulate is carried on. Three lamps giving a brilliant light are the means used. These are carefully trimmed every night, and are placed on a stand ready for lighting. They are alternately lighted and extinguished until there is good reason to believe that the signal is seen and understood."

The Englishman mused a little time.

"This is awkward, very awkward," he said. "If one of them is always at home, and the boy constantly on the watch, I don't see how the signals we want can be given," he said. "If both of them were absent together, it could easily be managed, but how is that to be brought about?"

Here Juliana's ready wit came to her aid.

Smiling, she said—

"I think I can answer for being able to get John Allen, his nephew, out of the way for half an hour, or even an hour."

"Ah, I see! you are a clever girl—a good girl. He is enamoured of you (which is, indeed, no wonder), and you think you can bend him to your purpose."

Juliana blushed a little, and was a good deal pleased at the compliment.

"I can arrange it if you do not make the time too late at night."

"What is the latest hour?"

"I could not well be out later than twelve o'clock, unless it were a very special occasion, such as a ball; but if you will make it twelve o'clock I will contrive to visit a female friend and ask him to escort me home. Of course, you must select a night when it is almost certain that my uncle-in-law will be absent till late. Now, it happens that I know such will be the case on two nights next week. He is going out to dinner on each of these

occasions, and when he does so he always stays late, for he is a man fond of his wine."

"That will do admirably if it does not happen to be a brilliantly light night. Which are those two days next week on which he will be absent?"

Juliana was able to inform him, and our friend, making a rapid calculation, found there would be no moon on either occasion

CHAPTER XV.

A CONFESSION OF LOVE.

"WE will appoint the first night of the two, Juliana, if it is dark enough, and the time shall be between eleven and twelve, as near eleven as possible, that is to say, if it is not too clear and starlight."

"Then leave that to me. I will arrange that John Allen shall be absent from his post from eleven till twelve. But what course do you propose to adopt?"

"Oh! I have decided on my plan. I have carefully reconnoitred the premises, and, provided with a small ladder, will gain access to the room like a burglar, but without any intention of that sort. It is only some ten feet from the ground, and I can do it with the utmost ease, provided there is no one in the room."

"There will be no one in the room. No person is allowed to enter the office of the Consulate during the absence of my uncle, except his nephew. The door will be locked, and the key in the possession of the latter."

"Then it is easy," cried the Englishman, joyfully. "There is an abundance of shrubs all about the base of that wing, and, concealed by these, I can steal up un-awares, lie in wait till I see the signal—the rocket—from the harbour, make my escalade, light the lamps, and foil the Yankee. Ten minutes will do it easily. If I can only have that time undisturbed, I can safely cry 'victory.'"

"Remember that it is just possible that Enoch Allen may also see or hear of the rocket, and so may his nephew. In either case each would hurry home, and I fear I should not be able to detain the latter; he would be too much terrified at the consequences to himself of his breach of duty in being absent from his post."

"Have you thought, Juliana, of the consequences to

yourself? When all is discovered, will not you be suspected?"

"I have thought of that," the young lady replied, quietly. "I shall be suspected and accused of it when all is discovered, but I must bear that, and the reproaches that will be heaped upon me. Of course, it is impossible you should gain access to the room without leaving some trace of how it was done. Nevertheless, I will do what I promised. Any harshness I may have to put up with will only be for a little time longer. When I am my own mistress I will no longer live under the roof of Enoch Allen, though he is the husband of the only relative I have in the world. Mine is a sad lot—alone in the world."

There was something very sad in her tone and manner as she said this, and George's heart warmed towards her.

"My dearest Julie," he cried, "do not say that. You shall never want a friend or a protector while I live. Would to heaven I might offer myself as one who would have a dearer or nearer right—for, sweet Julie, you know I love you. It would be a mockery on my part, however, to speak on such a subject, or to ask you to pledge yourself to a man who has engaged in a perilous undertaking. At any day I may fall, fighting for the Confederacy."

"Oh, no, no; do not say that," the gentle girl cried. "Live, dear George, for my sake, for you know full well I love you."

There could no longer be any secret between these two.

The Englishman's gratitude and warmth of heart, combined with the Spanish girl's great beauty and many charms of mind and person, added to her love for him—which he had long suspected—had brought about a sudden *denouement*. She was weeping—his words had brought tears to her gentle eyes, and an avowal from her.

He drew her towards him gently, and kissed her lips, which willingly met his.

And so these two sealed their troth with the first kiss of young love. The first on her part—though, alas! in the course of his wanderings, the Englishman, somewhat

volatile in these matters, had before now breathed words of love and everlasting devotion.

Let us hope that on this occasion he means to and will keep his word.

"I must leave you now, dearest Julie," he said, after a few moments pleasantly spent in listening to her whispered words of love. "I must go on board, and consult with our commander as to the details of our plan."

"For the present, farewell, dearest," she sighed, clinging to him, however, as though loth to part with her now declared lover. "Remember, I am thine—thine only—for ever thine."

One more kiss, witnessed only by the sentinel stars and he took his leave of her.

CHAPTER XVI

AN EVENTFUL DAY FOR THE CRUISER.

At length the day, the eventful day, big with the fate of the rebel cruiser, arrived. On that night, at eleven o'clock precisely, the attempt was to be made—an attempt which, if it resulted in failure would probably be utter destruction. It may be imagined with what anxious looks the sky was scanned all the afternoon, in hopes of a dark night, and with what joy the Confederate men saw great masses of clouds rise on the southern horizon.

There seemed every prospect of a dark and stormy night.

Every possible precaution was taken, and a close scrutiny made of the machinery: for, of course, the least break down would of a certainty prove fatal. The boilers had been now repaired, and it was calculated with reason that the steamer could be driven at the rate of fourteen miles an hour.

Night came, and all hearts beat high with anxious expectation.

So soon as what was done on board could not be seen by prying eyes, the chain was carefully and noiselessly slipped, and the vessel lay fastened only by a hawser, head and stern.

The smoke which proceeded from her funnel would be seen plainly enough, but in order that this fact might be no guide to the enemy, the fires had been lighted every night. The last rays of daylight just revealed the Mohican sullenly patrolling to and fro on her beat.

"Pray heaven, we may never see her again!" said Stanton Glynne, as he watched her pass the mouth of the harbour, just at dusk. "Now or never. At present everything seems in our favour. The night will not be starlight, and the wind will send our smoke inland, and away from the enemy."

While every possible preparation was being made on board the *Fiery Cross*, neither the first lieutenant nor Juliana Cordova neglected their parts. The former, shortly after dusk, concealed himself in the shrubs around the house of the American Consul, where he had previously hidden a short light ladder; and the young lady prepared to induce John Allen to desert his post. The boy who was stationed to watch might easily be left to himself. He would see the rocket and hasten, in the first place, to the room where the lights were to be shown. He would find it locked up, and then, if he could learn whither Mr. John Allen had gone, would probably hurry in search of him, but he would be too late. That seemed a certainty.

There remained John Allen, with whom the young lady did not anticipate much difficulty, for he was, or professed to be, desperately enamoured of her. At all events, he was extremely anxious to extort a favourable answer to his suit from her—a promise to marry him.

At nine o'clock precisely Juliana knocked at the door of the secretary's private office, knowing that he was there; indeed, all that afternoon she watched him with a skill and persistence of which a woman alone could be capable. Though almost his every movement was known to her, he had very little idea of it.

He rose and greeted her with great cordiality, though wondering not a little what could have brought the proud beauty to his room. Such a thing had never happened before.

She was in evening dress, with a cloak over her shoulders, and a veil, in the Spanish fashion, on her head, in place of hat or bonnet.

She looked very lovely.

"Mr. Allen," she said, "I have come to beg a favour of you."

Lately she had been much more gracious and urbane to the secretary, but this was something new indeed for her to come to his room, specially to ask a favour of him.

"My dear young lady—may I be permitted to call you Juliana?—it is granted. Anything I can do to serve you I will."

"I have promised to visit a friend of mine, and shall not stay late. Uncle has gone out, and I have no one to escort me home. Since that terrible rebel pirate has been here I do assure you I am quite afraid of being out alone after dark. They tell me they are a desperate set of fellows, and there are always some of them prowling about. I might be carried off on board their vessel. These pirates care not what they do."

"A dreadful set of ruffians, indeed," he put in, eagerly, "and certainly I should not advise you to go alone, or return alone."

"Then accompany me there. It is only a quarter of an hour's walk; and come and fetch me at eleven precisely."

"Really, my dear Juliana——" He watched her as he said this, and, observing that she did not resent the freedom, felt highly flattered.

"Ah, ha!" he said to himself, "she is coming round to me. My perseverance is beginning to have its effect. Given time and opportunity, a man can always bend a woman to his will—can always win her."

"Well, sir, I have not had your answer yet," she said, a little impatiently.

He hesitated.

"Oh, I see you do not care about the trouble. Good evening."

She turned her head and prepared to depart.

"Stay, stay, Juliana," he said; "let me explain."

She stopped on the threshold, and turned to him.

"I should be most happy, but—but——"

"But what, sir?"

"But the Consul is out, and he has strictly charged me not to leave while he is away. There is some business concerning this rebel pirate that demands our constant attention, and it is necessary one of us should be constantly at the Consulate."

"Oh, nonsense! A few minutes would make no difference," she cried, in affected anger. "The fact is, you do not care sufficiently about me——never mind," interrupting herself, "do as you please, only after this evening never dare address me again, except compelled to do so

when we meet at the table. If you do, I shall not answer you."

"Juliana!" he pleaded.

"Don't dare to call me Juliana," she cried, indignantly, "I will not suffer it. Good evening."

"Pray do not be unreasonable," he cried, starting to his feet. "I will do anything you wish—tyrant that you are."

Instantly she was appeased.

"Why could you not say so at once, then, instead of provoking me?" she said, in a much milder tone. "I hate to be trifled with."

"Indeed, I did not wish to make you angry; but I assure you that in doing as you ask me I shall be committing a grave fault, and one that uncle, if he knew it, would not easily forgive."

"Oh, nonsense," she cried. "I suppose Mr. Allen does not wish me to go out alone, unprotected, at night?"

"I am at your service, only do not be angry; say that you forgive me."

"Yes, I forgive you; only make haste."

"I will just tell the boy where to find me in case I am wanted. I will join you in two minutes. By the way, where is it you wish to go?"

She told him.

"Oh, that is not far. You will not require to detain me?"

"No, not for a minute."

"Then I am at your service. I will just run upstairs and tell the lad, in case anything should occur."

He did so, and Juliana inwardly exclaimed—

"So far so good. I have triumphed, as I knew I should. Now all the rest is clear. I shall have done my part. Pray heaven that nothing occurs to him."

In five minutes she and Mr. John Allen were walking together towards her friend's house.

She was very agreeable and condescending to him, and as they arrived at the door she said, in her sweetest accents—

"I will not detain you, Mr. Allen."

"Ah," he cried, "why this formality and address Why will you call me Mr.? Why not John?"

"Well, John, then, if you like," the lady replied.

"And may I call you Juliana?"

"Yes, if you will promise to come and fetch me at an hour before midnight—stay, no—at five minutes to eleven.

"I will promise; but may I call you dear Juliana?"

He might have called her Jezabel with her free consent, if he pleased, now that she had gained her point.

"Yes," she said, "you may call me so if you will be punctual. But mind, if you are late I will never forgive you."

"I will be here to a minute; for the present—adieu, dear—dearest Juliana."

She laughed a low, quiet laugh, and ran into the house, while he made the best of his way back.

"What a tarnation row I should get in if anything were to happen to-night, and the 'boss' were to know I was not there to signal. However, it's all right. I reckon they're tired of trying. They've found out by this time that we keep too sharp a look out for them."

Consoling himself with this reflection he hastened back.

We need not say that punctual to his time he returned, and was again at the service of Juliana at five minutes before eleven. This time it was necessary to detain him, which she did. Minute after minute slipped by, and though he began to grow impatient he dared not complain.

But now we must relate what occurred in the meantime at the Consulate.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE SIGNALS—YANKEE AND CONFEDERATE.

LONG before the appointed hour—the hour which was destined, perhaps, to decide the fate of the rebel cruiser, and the life or death of many a gallant heart on board her—Captain George, having posted himself in a good position, was anxiously on the watch.

He had climbed a small tree near the house, and could command a view both of the harbour and the sea outside. Several times he fancied he could make out the dark shape of the Yankee vessel as she cruised about, and was certain he had more than once made out her lights.

The minutes seemed to pass very slowly till eleven o'clock: He had set his watch exactly right, and the minute-hand pointed to five past the hour, and yet no signal rocket. He was beginning to get very anxious, when all at once a stream of fire shooting high in the air told him that the hour had come.

He was down the tree in a few seconds, and quickly creeping up between the windows—which now were all dark—planted his ladder and ascended.

Fortune favoured him. The window was not fastened, and he was spared the additional risk which having to force an entrance would have caused. Cautiously entering, he pushed down the ladder lest it should attract the attention of some servant of the establishment.

Then he seated himself, and waited for the appearance of the two blue lights which should inform him that the ship was fairly on her course.

A half-minute, and these were seen. Then he went to work calmly and deliberately, on the principle of "more haste less speed," to light the three lanterns which he had previously seen on stands in each window. But here

occurred something very awkward. He found that they were all three secured by a small padlock; however, he was not long at a loss. Producing his revolver, he quickly proceeded to smash in the glass of first one and then another, till all three were ready to be lighted.

He struck a match, and lit the first; but as he did so an unexpected interruption occurred.

Of course, though he did his utmost, he could not smash a square of glass in three lanterns with the butt-end of a pistol without making some noise. He made as little as possible, but still sufficient to prevent his hearing the opening of the door and the entry of another person.

He had lighted the first lantern, and was about to do the same by the second, when a heavy hand was laid on his shoulder.

"Hallo? what the——is all this?——Who the blazes are you, eh?"

It was fortunate our friend had his revolver loaded in his hand. Quick as thought he wrenched himself round and free from the grasp of the new-comer, and the next instant the barrel of the pistol was presented straight at the head of a tall, bony man of muscular build, and a determined expression of face.

"Stand off, stand still, and be silent, or you are a dead man," said Captain George; and as he spoke the ominous click of the deadly six-shooter was heard as he brought it to the full-cock.

There was a moment's pause, during which the two men confronted each other. Captain George guessed who it was.

"In answer to your question," he said, quietly, "as to who I am, I will ask you another, and meanwhile advise you to keep quiet and silent, or I will pistol you as you stand, for I am a desperate man. Who are you?"

"I am Consul to the United States Government at this port, and my name is Enoch Allen. Who are you, and what do you want? Plunder—you will not find much here, nothing but books, papers, and that sort of thing connected with the business."

The man spoke firmly, and Captain George saw he had not a coward to deal with.

The Yankees, despite their faults, their arrogance and boasting, have, as a nation, abundantly proved their courage.

This is a tribute deserved and undeniable, and the writer of this narrative is one of the first to bear witness to the personal bravery, intrepidity of Americans—pure born Americans—not the questionable hords who throng that country, the prodigals of Europe, the Bohemians of the Old World.

The situation was one requiring promptitude and nerve ; to hesitate was to be lost.

One of the lanterns was alight ; the others must be lighted, and that at once.

Captain George, keeping his pistol still pointed full at the head of Mr. Enoch Allen, moved slowly round towards the door, which he approached backwards. As he did so, he spoke as follows—

“I will tell you who I am and my purpose. I am no robber, but first lieutenant of the Fiery Cross, the Confederate man-of-war now in this harbour.”

The Consul started, and gave vent to an exclamation ; as he did so, his hand approached his breast.

“Take your hand away from your breast-pocket, Mr. Consul, and without a weapon, or, by heaven, you are a dead man. Quick, obey, while I count three, or I fire. One, two, three.”

The Consul hesitated but half a moment, but his life was so evidently in the power of his antagonist at that moment that he thought discretion the better part of valour, and removed his hand without the pistol, which he intended to have produced. Had he done so, the lieutenant would certainly have shot him instantly, and risked the chance of escape.

“Consul, I am, as I told you, no robber, and my intention is to light those lanterns. First, however, I will shut the door.”

This he did, still keeping his pistol levelled, and walking backwards until he had attained his object ; and Enoch Allen stood motionless, his keen grey eyes steadfastly bent on the intruder, who, so far, was master of the position.

"Now listen to me, Mr. Allen, and mark well my words. I am a desperate man; bent on a desperate enterprise; and I will succeed or perish. Anyhow, even if I fail, you must die first. I have twenty of my men armed, and within call. I have little fear as to making my own escape; but I will not do so, unless I can first gain my point. I want those lanterns lighted; I command you to light them. Refuse, and I pistol you where you stand."

"Why do you want them lighted?"

"As a signal to the Mohican Yankee sloop-of-war—a signal which I intend shall mislead her commander, and facilitate the escape of my own vessel."

Enoch Allen hesitated for a moment or two.

"What if I refuse?"

"I will shoot you through the head and light them myself. The door is shut; the household all in bed; the report of a revolver is not loud. I can kill you if I please, and still gain my end."

There was much truth in this, and the Consul, though a brave man, was also a prudent one.

He was a sufficiently good judge of character to feel certain that the man before him would keep his word.

"Very well, friend pirate, I will light the lanterns, but let me tell you it will do you no service. You don't understand our signals, I see, though you think you do."

"Do as you are told, and that at once. As to whether it does me good or not, that is my business."

In a short time all the lanterns were brightly burning. The Confederate lieutenant still kept the Consul awed by his pistol. He glanced every now and then from the window out to sea, and presently saw what he looked for, a blue light burned on board the Mohican, as an acknowledgment of the signal.

"Ha! now for the finish. Consul Enoch Allen, I have not done with you yet."

"Well, pirate, what next?"

"Put out those lights one by one, and as I tell you. First extinguish this one, the one farthest to the east."

Then Enoch Allen saw that the rebel lieutenant knew all about it.

There was again a pause, a dead silence of nearly a quarter of a minute.

"Put out the light I order you to."

"No," was the dogged reply.

"Then I fire."

"Shoot away—I can only die once."

Bitter enemy though he was to the cause, Captain George could not help admiring the courage of the Yankee.

For a few moments he hesitated.

"Consul Allen," he said, "I ought, I suppose, to keep my word, and shoot you through the head, but I can't find it in my heart. I admire a brave man, whoever he may be. So I will just do it myself. But remember, though I spare you now and do not execute my threat by shooting you in cold blood—if you attempt anything against me, that will be a different matter—in self-defence I would shoot a field full."

Then he slowly approached the first lantern, never taking his eye from the Yankee, nor lowering the pistol, which still pointed straight at his head. He was obliged to move backwards and feel for the broken square of glass with his left hand. This found he inserted his hand, not without some difficulty, and extinguished the light by pressing his bare palm on the flaming wick. It caused him intense pain, of course, but this was no time to stand on trifles.

Then he advanced in the same way to the second of the three lanterns, and served this in the same manner. His hands was now badly scorched.

"Yankee Consul, this hurts," he said, calmly. "Will you extinguish the third, or won't you?"

"I'll see you shot first, you cursed pirate!"

Captain George was smarting with the pain, and this infuriated him greatly. His finger was on the trigger of his revolver, and for a second or two he debated whether he should carry out his threat or not. But his better nature prevailed, and he could not find it in his heart to shoot a man in cold blood.

So he himself extinguished the other. Before doing so, however, he lit a small wax taper. It did not suit

him to be left in the dark, with a man who he felt convinced was armed with a pistol like himself.

The Consul could not repress a groan.

He had calculated that when the last lantern was extinguished they would be in the dark together, and then he determined to use his pistol, even if he lost his own life.

"Mister rebel," he said, "you've done your thieves' work—now I reckon you had best clear out. I'll have the pleasure of seeing you hanged yet, some day."

"I doubt it. And as for clearing out, I'm in no hurry. It suits me to wait a few minutes more, so that you may not have an opportunity to give another signal in time to do harm. I want the Mohican to wait just where she is—off here, and not go steaming off to the westward of the harbour, where our little vessel is before this."

"Is she, mister pirate!" cried the Consul, suddenly bursting into a laugh of triumphant joy. "Then she's in trouble, I'll bet my life, for the Mohican is either there, or hard on after her."

"What do you mean? Do you think we watched your signals night after night, and made sham attempts to go out for nothing?"

"I do so, stranger. You're been too cute by half this time. I've had reason to suspect something of the sort this week; and last night we reversed all the signals—turned 'em upside down—so that you've just signalled for our cruiser to follow on the right tack. Reckon your pirate craft will be blown out o' water before long. Ha! ha! ha!"

The Consul's joy was genuine. There could be little doubt of that.

The rebel lieutenant saw that a terrible mistake had been committed.

An exclamation of anger broke from him, and the next moment there was heard the sound of approaching feet, and the door being hastily thrown open, a man rushes in.

"Shoot him!" cries the Consul; "shoot the cursed pirate!"

Captain George moves quickly to the window—turns as he reaches it.

As he does so the sharp report of a pistol is heard, instantly followed by that of the lieutenant of the Fiery Cross.

Then another crack; and just as he is on the point of leaping from the window he falls, wounded.

Then is heard the shriek of a woman, and Juliana rushes into the room, just as her lover, the hero of the adventure, is shot.

The Consul shouts aloud, now—

“Seize him—secure the pirate!”

Juliana’s shrieks go to increase the din, and altogether the scene is one of excitement and confusion.

The tramp of men’s feet is heard approaching, as the domestics of the house, alarmed by the noise, rush to the Consulate room.

John Allen—he it was who, warned by the boy, made all possible haste back, had rushed in at such an inopportune moment for the unfortunate Englishman—rushed on, revolver in hand, to seize our friend or shoot him, just as he endeavoured to stagger to his feet.

But Juliana, seeing his intent, threw herself on him, and clung to him in such a manner that he could not raise his pistol hand to fire, nor yet approach the Englishman.

Then woman’s wit came to her aid.

“Don’t, John—pray don’t go near him. He’ll kill you. I’m sure he will. Oh! he is one of those dreadful pirates. Come away, do.”

The few moments this manœuvre of hers gained were of inestimable value to the rebel lieutenant, who, though wounded, was not seriously so.

He had retained possession of his revolver, when he fell, shot in the right thigh; and when he arose, turned full on his foes, like a stag at bay, and fired—not at the secretary, for he was protected by Juliana, who still clung to him—but at the Consul, who fell at the first discharge. The other barrels of his revolver he fired indiscriminately at the mob who crowded the door.

Then he threw the empty weapon among them, with a hearty curse, and leaped from the window.

Before he could be pursued to any effect, he was in comparative safety ; and though wounded and bitterly chagrined at the mistake, he now felt confident he had made good his escape.

And now it is time we devoted a chapter to what befell the rebel steamer—the Fiery Cross.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE FARTHER ADVENTURES OF THE FIERY CROSS.

At ten minutes before eleven exactly, the third lieutenant, who had been despatched in the cutter to reconnoitre, returned and reported that the Yankee man-of-war had just gone past the mouth of the harbour, steering to the eastward.

This was exactly what was required, and without a moment's delay word was passed down to the engine-room to "fire up." At the same time the hawsers by which she was moored were cast off, and a few minutes after eleven on this cloudy night the **Fiery Cross** moved down the harbour towards the open sea.

The rocket shot up and the blue lights burned, as was expected.

Away she sped through the waves, through the smooth water of the harbour, at the speed of something over fourteen knots.

Not a light was to be seen.

Not a sound to be heard, save the dull thumping of the engines, working at high pressure rate, and the rush of the water at her bows.

Gliding along thus, in utter darkness and silence, she might be some phantom ship.

Stanton Glynne, with Wharncliffe by his side, stands at the helm. The other officers are grouped together about the quarter-deck. The men are all lying down at their quarters; and below, on the lower decks, are the battle lanterns, all ready to be brought up at a moment's notice.

For it is quite possible that this attempt to run out of so narrow a channel, so closely blockaded, may end in a battle.

Arrived near the harbour heads, her course is suddenly changed from nearly due south to west-nor'-west—and this in a few minutes brings her close into the land. The lead is now set a-going, but the seaman in the chains does not sing out in the usual cheery manner.

The word is passed in a whisper, and onward through the gloom steams the rebel cruiser.

No sign of the enemy.

The night, though not pitch dark, is gloomy and sombre enough, and a hazy squall coming up with the south-westerly wind, promises to be of aid in hiding the vessel from the too powerful enemy.

Five minutes passed, and the harbour is left behind.

The vessel has been kept as close as possible to the shore, and it would almost seem as if the high, frowning cliffs were within a stone's throw.

The water at this point begins to shoal rapidly, so much so as to cause the vessel's course to be altered considerably seaward.

It was necessary also to slacken speed a little, as a heavy rain squall, which came up very rapidly, rendered it impossible to see more than a few yards ahead.

There was at this moment not more than a fathom of water between the keel and the bottom.

The rain squall was hailed as a perfect God-send by all on board the Fiery Cross, for, wrapped in its watery mantle, it was of course impossible for the enemy to discover her. Accordingly the engines were eased, and on she went in the gloom at about eight knots.

There had been a stiff breeze blowing, but this gradually fell, killed by the rain, as sailors say, and in about ten minutes it was nearly dead calm.

The engineer came aft and informed the captain that it was necessary to cool his bearings, which were dangerously hot, and he suggested that the present was an excellent opportunity.

The rain still came down fast, completely enshrouding the vessel, so that she could not have been seen at a couple of hundred yards distance.

Accordingly the engines were stopped that this might be attended to.

After the clanking and groaning of the engines, the thumping of the screw, and the roar of the cleft water at her bows, it seemed now like perfect silence.

Naught was to be heard save the monotonous wash of the waves and the steady pattering of the rain.

This latter now began to abate, and shortly fell only in light drizzle.

This, however, was sufficient to render the atmosphere thick and hazy, a circumstance eminently favourable to the rebel steamer.

The engineer seemed to be an unconsciously long time cooling the bearings. The rain squall was fast passing over, and in a short time more there might be a clear sky.

Now at this moment the enemy's sloop-of-war, directed by the signals from the Consul's house (unfortunately given by Captain George quite correctly for the Yankee owing to the change), was coming down full pelt towards where lay the rebel steamer.

Stanton Glynne, impatiently pacing the quarter-deck, halts suddenly in his walk and listens intently.

Lieutenant Wharncliffe joined him.

A dull, regular, thumping sound is distinctly heard by both, a sound which their practised ears instantly recognised as caused by a steamer.

"The enemy, by all that's holy!" said the young commander. "The squall is clearing off. We can't be more than a quarter of a mile off by the sound. Start the engines—hang the bearings! We must run for it, but it's ten to one we're in for a fight this time."

Wharncliffe ran to the engine-room hatch and shouted down—

"Go ahead, at all hazards. The Mohican is upon us!"

But instantly afterwards the voice of Captain Glynne is heard.

"Hold hard; stop her!"

And the obedient engines, after revolving a few times, are again still, like sleeping giants.

Wharncliffe hastens back to the commander, around whom all the other officers are grouped.

"What is it?" he asks. "Hark! she is nearing us every moment: she will be on us directly."

"A light on the port bow," is now heard from the seaman on the look-out. And sure enough a light, two lights, those of a steamer, are seen. The men were all lying down at quarters, and now, as by instinct, they rise, and each one goes to his station. The gunners to their guns, the boarders and small arms men forward, and the marines in the waist.

Each heart beats high, not with fear, but excitement, and with a full consciousness of the great danger. A desperate fight was about to commence, an unequal battle, where the odds were quite two to one against them.

Death, a Yankee prison, or victory. These were the alternatives.

And for victory they would fight a hard fight.

And now through the misty gloom the dark hull of a vessel is seen bearing down upon them.

She sees them, for the clang of her bell in the engine-room is heard plainly, "Stop her."

Stanton Glynne gazes hard at the vessel. So does his lieutenant, Wharncliffe, with anxious surprise. Although the other vessel's engines have stopped, she still comes on by reason of the way she has on her.

"A paddle steamer!"

"It's not the Mohican."

"What the devil can she be?"

"A ship of war. I can see her guns."

"Her crew are not at quarters."

Such were the lowly uttered exclamations on every side.

"Start the engines; go a-head slowly," said the young commander.

This was a judicious order, as a steam ship, or indeed any other ship, at rest is like a horse without a bridle. Where there is no way on her the helm is powerless.

"Perhaps this is not an enemy," remarked Wharncliffe.

"She can't be a friend," said Stanton Glynne, laconically.

Darby Kelly, who was a privileged person, by reason

of his past services, and his being as it were a sort of retainer of Captain George, the absent first lieutenant, now made a suggestion.

"Shure, captain, now, an' ye don't know whither she's frind or inimy; blaze away at her, and inquire afterwards."

But for many reasons this course was not adopted.

She might be an English steamer, or a Frenchman, or Spaniard; one thing was certain, she was not a Confederate.

Momentarily the two vessels got nearer and nearer, until they lay broadside to broadside scarce fifty yards apart.

The crew of the unknown were all at quarters by this time, but from the indifference and absence of excitement, it did not seem as though they expected a fight.

"A Yankee, by heavens!" cried Wharncliffe; "I can make out the uniforms."

"What ship is that?" was now bellowed by the captain of the stranger.

"Cover up some of those battle lanterns," said Stanton Glynne, in a low tone. "Quiet; don't let him recognise us by our uniforms. I have an idea which may save us." Then the young commander went to the weather quarter, and made answer to the hail—

"The United States sloop of war Mohican. What ship is that?"

There was a pause of anxious expectation, and amidst a silence, broken only by the wash of the waves, came the answer—

"The United States war-steamer Nantucket. I heard from a Portland schooner we spoke yesterday, you were blockading a rebel pirate in this port. Can we render you any assistance?"

"Yes; run down to the eastward full steam. It has been signalled us from the town that she has run out under cover of this rain squall. If you fall in with her, blaze away. We will cruise about here. Probably she will try to pass as a friend. She got off so the other night from one of our cruisers. She carries heavier guns than you, but is weakly manned. Fire your broadside, and take her by board, if you fall in with her. I

will run down to your assistance if I hear firing. She's barque rigged, like ourselves. If you see her, fire a blank gun."

There was a moment or two of suspense, and then was heard the sound of the engine-room bell on board the Nantucket.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE FIERY CROSS GOES INTO ACTION.

As Stanton Glynne recognized the well-known signal, "Go ahead," he could have shouted for joy.

The next minute the Fiery Cross was cutting through the water under full steam, at the rate of quite thirteen knots.

Going in opposite directions at full speed, the two vessels were very soon out of each other's sight.

Then, and not till then, did the rebel commander give vent to his joy.

"Hurrah! lads. We've dodged them; we're safe this time. Three cheers for the Fiery Cross!"

The men, worked up to a state of great excitement, responded right willingly, and on went the escaped rebel, every five minutes putting another mile between her and the dangerous harbour of Cienfuegos.

The excitement was not all over yet, however. Fresh and wondrous adventures were yet in store for the Fiery Cross—on that very night—within an hour.

Scarcely has she parted from the Nantucket a quarter of that time, than a gun is heard astern—then another, and another—till it amounted to a brisk cannonade.

"Wonder what that means?" said Hubert Glynne.

He was standing with his brother alone on the bridge.

Stanton Glynne's reply was to touch the engine-room bell.

"Starboard," he shouted to the helmsman.

The vessel came slowly round by force of the way she had on her, though the engines had stopped, and shortly lay with her broadside presented towards the direction of the firing.

"What does it mean?" he cried, in joyful excitement.

"Why, it means that the captain of the Nantucket

has fallen into the trap, and the pair of them are now blazing away at each other."

Boom! boom! boom! boom!

The cannonade grows fiercer each moment.

"Go on ahead!"

That is the next order the engine-room bell rings forth. The helm being still kept to starboard, round she comes, until her head is towards where the flash and roar of the cannon can be seen and heard.

"Steady!" cries the captain; and, in obedience to the order, the helmsman keeps her straight for the place of conflict.

"But, brother mine," said Hubert Glynne, in bewilderment, "I am no sailor, but I am quite certain this is not the way to escape. The ship is going straight back again."

"Yes, I know that."

"But what are you going to do?"

"To see the fun."

"Oh, he's mad—mad," groaned Hubert; "he's gone mad with excitement."

"Not a bit of it. Hark! There they are. They're coming to close quarters. I can hear the sharp rattle of small arms. Come along, Hubert. We'll have a brief council, and just two minutes will settle it. I've got something to propose, and if I find my officers and crew are of my mind, I'll wake snakes and give the Yankees something to talk about for many a day. Mr. Sutton," (this to the third lieutenant), "come and take the bridge, if you please."

The consultation held in the cabin of the Fiery Cross was a very brief one. Stanton Glynne in two or three sentences propounded his plan.

Its very audacity, though it staggered every officer present, fired their imaginations and excited their ardour. There was not one dissident.

"Now for my men. I'll see how they like it," cried the young commander, going on deck. "All hands aft. My gallant men, sailors and marines, I know you are anxious for a fight. I give you an opportunity. Hark to the guns ahead. The two Yankee ships are blazing

away at each other. Both of them must be pretty well knocked about by this time, and most likely the Nantucket sinking. We are fresh ; they must be tired, and, besides, have lost a lot of men. I'm going to run right down into the thick of it ; lay our little craft alongside the Mohican, and, if you fight as I think you will, we'll take the blundering great bully by the board."

It was long before the tremendous shouting which greeted this proposal could be quelled. The officers ran about among the men entreating them to be silent and cool. Cool ! It was an impossibility. Every man was in a perfect frenzy of excitement.

At last, however, discipline asserted its sway, and panting, flushed, with fast-beating pulse and gleaming eyes, the crew of the Fiery Cross stood to their guns.

On went the rebel steamer, audaciously steering right for the enemy's sloop-of-war Mohican, which an hour back they were so desperately anxious to avoid.

"Cover up all the battle lanterns. Silence fore and aft. Let not a light be seen until the word is given."

The cannonade had now ceased, and borne on the air came the sound of shouts and the fire of musketry and pistols. The two vessels could now be plainly seen not more than a mile and a half distant, closely lashed together.

The captain of the Nantucket had fallen into the snare with a vengeance, and after waging an unequal conflict with cannon against the supposed rebel, had actually run down the Mohican and boarded her.

But here we will relate what they saw at the Consulate house, and also what our friend Captain George thought of the affair.

At the moment of which we speak he was ejaculating in the bitterness of his heart.

"And all this is owing to my accursed folly and carelessness. They must have been mad to attempt boarding the Yankee."

For he saw by the light of the lanterns on board the Mohican, and by the flash of the small arms, a desperate and unequal conflict waged.

He did not see the full extent of the disaster.

CHAPTER XX.

AFTER THE ENGLISHMAN'S ESCAPE.

AFTER the escape of the Englishman by leaping through the window, there was for a time great noise and confusion in the Consul's house. Two of the domestics—negroes—had been wounded by the random discharge of Captain George's pistol among them.

There was, of course, a rush for the window, and John Allen fired all the barrels of his pistol among the shrubbery, without effect, however.

Juliana withdrew and would gladly have escaped, but Enoch Allen placed himself between her and the door.

"Silence, all you niggers; clear out of this. John, you darned young fool, come away from the window. Help me pick this lantern up. The fellow has escaped—so much the worse, but it's not worth making a noise about. Light No. 1 lantern, quick. I don't care for a dozen lieutenants getting away if we can only catch that d—— pirate."

The Consul had his wits about him, and at his command the negroes and others all vanished and the hubbub ceased.

"Now then, all three together," he said. "We will give the question signal. Juliana, take a spill and light No. 3, while I light No. 2."

Juliana hesitated.

To refuse would be to betray her complicity in the plot.

But she could not bear the idea of lending her aid against the cause for which her lover perilled his life. While even uncertain as yet as to his fate, it seemed to her the grossest treachery to help in this signalling business.

"No, uncle; I feel faint; I cannot do it."

The Consul scowled on her and shouted for one of his servants.

Juliana again attempted to leave the room unobserved, whilst they were busy with the signal lanterns.

"Stay here a little while, Juliana," Enoch Allen said. "I wish to speak to you. Nay, by thunder! you shall stay."

He observed her quietly making away in spite of his command, so he quickly prevented her escape by locking the door and putting the key in his pocket.

The next quarter hour was occupied in signalling, lighting the lanterns, putting them out again, and so forth.

Juliana stood leaning against the wall in a remote corner, a wretched spectator of the scene.

She knew her lover was wounded. What was his fate? Had he escaped but to perish from loss of blood? Oh, that she were free from that house! She knew where to meet him if he were able to crawl there; if not, she could search the thick shrubbery, among which she thought it quite possible he might be lying, faint and bleeding.

But escape at present was impossible.

How bitterly then she hated the two Allens—uncle and nephew.

"I will never pass another night under this roof," she said, "come what may. I will appeal to his Excellency the Captain-General. He was a friend of my mother's, and loves the Yankees no better than do I."

"That will do, I think," the Consul said, complacently. "The Mohican has seen and understood our signals. We will now sit here and await the result, which, if Master Sam has any luck, will be the capture of the d— rebel pirate. Pedro, run round to my room and bring me my night telescope."

The negro departed, having been intrusted by his master with the key.

"Juliana," said Enoch Allen, "come and sit at the window here, the centre one; I shall speak with you presently."

"Can you not say what you have to say now?"

"I can, but it does not suit me; you are under my guardianship, remember, so please to obey."

Juliana thought it best to do so. Besides, she felt much anxiety as to the escape of the rebel cruiser, to forward which her lover had risked so much. So she seated herself at the window, and with chin leaning on her hand, looked forth on the sea.

The same rain squall which had thrown its protecting mantle over the Fiery Cross, now obscured the greater part of the ocean view commanded from the Consulate.

Slowly it cleared off, and then dimly through the haze a single light could be seen.

Towards this Enoch Allen directed his telescope.

Even as he did so another light was discerned.

"The Mohican. I can make her out. Ah! another light. By Jerusalem! it is the rebel; they are approaching each other—our vessel has overhauled her. Glorious! the rebel will soon be a prize."

As he ceased speaking there was a bright flash, followed by the boom of a heavy gun.

Then succeeded in rapid succession more flashes and the reports of other cannon, evidently lighter than the first.

The Consul and his nephew felt triumphant, and eagerly watched and listened.

Juliana's heart sank within her, her only consolation was that Captain George was not on board, a participant in the bloody contest about to ensue.

The encounter now began in earnest, and as the squall drifted away with the wind, the two vessels could be discerned, for on the decks of either there were many lights.

The Mohican now opened her fire, broadside and pivot guns, which was manfully returned by the other. Both vessels were soon enveloped in a dense cloud of white smoke, through which the flash of the guns could at times barely be seen.

The battle now raged with great spirit, the two ships as they fought approaching nearer to the point of view of our party of three. At intervals the smoke was drifted on one side by the wind, and then it appeared as

though the smaller vessel were endeavouring to get to close quarters, which the larger one, the Mohican, declined and evaded by steaming in a segment of a circle.

"D—— that rebel's impudence!" said the Consul. "I do believe she's trying to board the Mohican."

It certainly seemed like it, for ever and anon the lights on board the supposed rebel were seen to approach the other. Then the latter would go ahead, there would be a heavy exchange of firing, and the two would separate again.

Maintaining this running sort of fight, the two combatants approached nearer and nearer, and as at the same time the driving rain cleared off, a much better view could be obtained of the fight. But it must be borne in mind that the vessels were sometimes entirely enveloped in smoke, and at no time free therefrom. Thus the lookers on from the Consulate could not discover that the smaller of the two was a paddle-steamer—no other than the Nantucket.

Despite the superior force of the Mohican, she had suffered heavily, as had also the other.

But fortune had favoured the Nantucket, that is to say, if sending the third shot from her pivot gun on the waterline of the Mohican and nearly crippling her at once can be considered fortunate, considering that both vessels were of the same nation.

This third shot compelled the Mohican to detail nearly half her crew to repair the leak and keep the pumps going.

Nevertheless, the Nantucket suffered badly, especially from the shell gun of the other, the missiles from which had set her on fire.

The Nantucket, immediately on coming within shot-range of the Mohican, had blazed away at her without asking any questions, intending to force the supposed rebel to heave to and surrender.

The first shots, purposely fired high, took no effect, or only in the rigging. But the captain of the Mohican, in the confusion and excitement of a sudden and unexpected attack from the rebel he had thought fleeing from him in terror, did not exercise such discretion, and quickly the

crash of timber and the cries of wounded men were heard on board the Nantucket.

Now the combat had begun, neither stopped for explanation. Each accepted the other as the enemy.

Nor, in the confusion and excitement of the battle, was it noticed that the other was a paddle, or, if through an occasional rent in the canopy of smoke it was observed, no attention was paid to the fact.

She was an enemy; that was sufficiently proved by her sudden attack. And so the two vessels fought on, raking each other fore and aft in fine style.

Presently the climax of the battle approached.

As the vessels drifted and steamed to the eastward, and when nearly right abreast of the Consulate windows, distant only some two miles, the smaller vessel, after hauling off a little and slackening her fire for a time, was seen coming out of the smoke which hung around her and making full butt for the Mohican.

The latter endeavoured to avoid this headlong charge, but one of her tiller-ropes had been shot away, and another could not be rigged in time.

So the Nantucket came crash on to the starboard quarter of the Mohican, and a number of her men made a rush to take the supposed rebel by board.

At the same moment there was an explosion of ammunition on the main deck of the paddle-steamer, and even while a desperate conflict was going on forward, flames leaped aloft out of the after part of the ship.

The sight was now grand.

The glare of the flames, momentarily increasing in volume, lighted up the whole scene, which before had been only dimly revealed by the battle lanterns and the flash of the cannon.

Now, however, the watchers from the window could observe the whole of the desperate conflict.

The boarders from the Nantucket got a footing on the deck of the other, but were met with so desperate a resistance that they could with difficulty keep their ground. Still fresh men kept leaping on board, and had there been a superiority in number on the part of the Nantuckets, they would certainly have gained the day. When once

boarders have got a good footing on an enemy's deck it is very seldom they are beaten off. The enthusiasm, and what the French call *élan*, is greater always on the part of the attacking force.

This applies equally to land combats, as all those who have studied battles and sieges must have observed.

But the boarders were out-numbered; and when the whole crew of the Mohican, including those who had been working at the pumps, joined the defence, led on by the captain in person, they were beaten back in great confusion.

The flames on board the Nantucket leaped higher and higher. His captain led forward his last men, and leaped from his own burning vessel on board the other.

The fierceness of the attack for a time turned the scale, and it happened that one Yankee captain, at the head of his boarders, stood face to face with another.

They gazed hard at each other for a moment or two.

"What!" cried he of the Mohican, "Captain —— turned traitor?"

"Traitor yourself," cried the other; "accursed rebel! I still wear the uniform of the United States, and serve the flag I was brought up under."

"Rebel! United States! Serve the old flag still! Yes; it is old Sam's uniform. Oh, there is some terrible mistake here."

"Mistake!—are not you the rebel pirate?"

"No. Are not you?"

"No. I am the captain of the U.S. steam-ship Nantucket."

"And this is the Mohican! What cursed fools we have been; and what terrible mischief we have done!"

It was not without great difficulty that the combat was stayed. Gradually the crews of the two ships learned the truth—that they had been killing and wounding their own men for the last quarter hour. It was too late to save the Nantucket. She was now one mass of flames abaft the mainmast, and there was imminent danger of her setting light to the other.

So the order was given for all the wounded and the rest of the crew to be got on board the Mohican. The

burning ship was cast off, and all the boats of the Mohican lowered to effect the removal. All this, except the episode between the two captains, the watchers saw from the window.

But while the boats were busily employed taking the wounded from the burning ship; while some on board the Yankee sloop of war were at the pumps, others attending to their injured comrades, others, again, securing the guns—all depressed and disheartened, not only by reason of the reaction always subsequent on a fierce struggle, but also from the knowledge that they had been killing and wounding their friends, shedding their own blood in more than a useless cause, not one man ready to fight again, or dreaming of the necessity of such a thing, the three at the window of Enoch Allen's house saw something which filled two of them with dismay and astonishment, the other with astonishment only.

But what they saw and what occurred deserves another chapter

CHAPTER XXI.

WHAT ENOCH ALLEN SAW THROUGH A GLASS.

THE sea around the scene of the combat between the Mohican and the Nantucket was lighted up for fully a mile by the glare of the burning steamer.

Through this glass Enoch Allen could now plainly see everything which was being done on the deck of the former. He could see the guns being secured, the small arms, cutlasses, and boarding-pikes put away in their places; the wounded carried down below, the decks being scrubbed down, and all the many operations necessary on board a man-of-war after a fight.

Observing all this through his glass, also that no prisoners were put in irons, but that the men lately engaged in a deadly struggle now seemed to be on good terms together, and beyond all that the officers and the captain of the burning steamer, who leaped on board the Mohican at the head of their men, walking about the deck of the ship they had lately attacked, wearing their swords.

Noticing all this, the truth soon dawned on him, and bitter was his chagrin thereat.

Each of the two Yankee vessels had mistaken each other for the enemy, and the rebel pirate had escaped.

If he was mortified and burning with impotent rage at the defeat of his cherished plan by the escape of the Fiery Cross, what must have been his feelings at witnessing what follows.

He was gloomily and intently looking at the Mohican through his telescope when his attention was attracted by an exclamation from John Allen.

From out the darkness the outline of another steamer could be seen, a volume of black smoke pouring from her funnel, emerging full speed into the circle of light, the centre of which was the burning Nantucket.

The first expression of the Yankee Consul was this—
“Some merchant steamer attracted by the flames come to see if she can render any assistance.”

On came the steamer, and as minute by minute she got nearer the burning vessel and the Mohican, her hull and outline could be more plainly distinguished.

“A man-of-war, an armed steamer,” cried John Allen, “barque rigged, and not unlike the Fiery Cross.”

Enoch Allen remained silent and closely scrutinized the stranger through his telescope.

As he did so his face grew of a leaden colour, his lips were compressed hard, his brow knit.

But yet he said nothing, hoping against hope, scarcely believing in the possibility of what he dreaded.

Those on board the Mohican were so intent on their own business, and so utterly unsuspecting of danger that the strange steamer came within half a mile, and was not observed.

All at once, her course, which had been directly towards the burning ship, was altered, and she was now steered towards the stern of the Mohican in such a manner that as she passed her quarter her broadside would be effective.

At the moment her course was altered, two flags were run up : one at the peak, the other at the main.

A moment's glance showed what they were, for it was as light as day by reason of the glare of the burning vessel.

The one at the peak was the ensign of the Confederate States, that at the main a dark blue flag with a yellow cross thereon.

Enoch Allen leaped to his feet, dashed down the glass, and gave vent to a perfect yell of rage.

“The Fiery Cross, the naval pirate herself ! She's going to attack the Mohican, and the fools are all asleep. Let off rockets, burn the lights. John, get the rocket-box, quick. Oh ! howls and furies, I can't stand this !”

Then he shouted aloud from the window in the frenzy of his rage, not remembering that his puny voice could not possibly be heard at two miles distant.

When John came with the rocket-box, he lit one after the other, and let them fly from the window.

Too late!

The second one had but just gone hissing aloft than again the roar of the cannon is heard.

The audacious rebel is seen to range up under the Mohican's starboard quarter, and, at a distance of not more than a hundred and fifty yards, open fire.

Immediately after the delivery of the broadside her helm is put hard a-port and her engines reversed. This brings her head round towards the Yankee, and then again she is seen to go ahead, firing with her pivot gun as she did so.

In two minutes she is close alongside the Yankee, on whose decks the wildest confusion reigns. Men run hither and thither; some hastily arm themselves, while others cast off the guns. These, however, form the minority; the majority are perfectly panic-stricken, and as shot after shot comes crashing into the vessel's hull, without possibility of reply, their terror increases four-fold.

By desperate exertions and example the officers rally around them a small band of about forty of the best men, but some of these are armed only with boarding-pikes, having cast their muskets away.

Scarcely have these been mustered on the quarter-deck than crash the two ships came together.

A volley of musketry and a fierce yell from the rebels are instantly followed by the leaping on board of fully a hundred well-armed men—indeed, the whole of the rebel crew, except a few left to work the ship, and the marines, who keep up a deadly fire from the quarter-deck. And now comes a struggle—fierce, bloody, and short.

The already wearied crew of the Mohican can offer no effectual resistance to the sudden onslaught of the rebels. Still they can offer enough to make the conflict a sanguinary one, especially as, by reason of the superiority in number of the Yankees, the Confederates are not inclined to be forbearing, and so throw a chance away.

First on board is Wharncliffe, closely followed by the captain, Stanton Glyune, and the volunteers rated on the

books as supernumerary midshipmen. Next comes Hubert Glynne, who has left his marines in charge of a lieutenant. As he leaps on board he is struck on the head by a boarding-pike, which knocks his hat off and causes a stream of blood to flow down his face.

"Hurrah for the Fiery Cross!" he shouts, and, revolver in one hand, sword in the other, his tall form is soon seen in the thickest of the fray.

Closely following him is Darby Kelly, the Irishman, who, during the absence of his master, Captain George, has taken him under his immediate protection. The big Irishman is armed with a capstan-bar, which he prefers to a cutlass, because he says it "reaches funder and hits harder."

The first rush of the desperate rebels is irresistible, but, though those who opposed the boarding were driven back or cut down in the space of half a minute or so, a number of others behind them had been encouraged and exhorted by their officers to sufficient effort to arm and present a front to the enemy. Thus, having totally routed or slaughtered their first opponents, the boarders find themselves opposed to another body drawn up on the deck before the mainmast, supplemented by the beaten remnant of the crew.

There was a moment's pause, Stanton Glynne thinking it advisable to let his men recover breath, and also give time for the rest of his crew to clamber on board and lend their aid.

At this point the fire of the marines and of the two carronades on the forecastle of the Fiery Cross was poured in with deadly effect.

Taking advantage of the confusion and dismay caused among the defenders by the fall of some six or seven of their number, the rebel commander waved his sword, and again cheered his men on. Then, amidst a perfect storm of yells and shouts, which almost drowned the musketry fire, the combat again commenced.

For a few minutes it raged fiercely and furiously. Darby Kelly's capstan-bar did good service, as did Hubert Glynne's cavalry sabre.

Stanton Glynne ran one more man through the body,

and shot down two more with his revolver ; and into the rear of the crowded mass of Yankees the marines and some dozen seamen left on board the Fiery Cross poured a destructive fusilade.

Men were falling on the side of the enemy at the rate of six or seven a minute.

This could not last long; the defence was momentarily getting weaker, as step by step the Yankees were driven back.

Arrived at the forecandle, a great rush was made, led by Hubert Glynn, who, bare-headed, his face covered with blood, dashed into the thick of the Yankees, cutting and thrusting right and left.

He penetrated so far among them that the crowd of defenders closed on him, and he was hemmed in on all sides; but Darby Kelly, who followed him closely, came to the rescue, and whirling his handspike round his head, soon opened a path by knocking down three or four of the foremost.

Then, with a wild Irish yell, he too rushed into the thick of the enemy. Wharreliffe and four sailors followed, and these being soon followed by others, the Yankees had a strong force of the enemy, all desperate fighting men, in their very midst.

Then there arose a panic cry, followed by a yell of triumph as the rebels saw the foe rush to the rigging, down below, over the bows—anywhere for safety.

Twenty or thirty fell or were pushed overboard ; as many more sought safety in the rigging, first throwing down their arms ; while quite fifty rushed down the fore-hatchway ; about eighty were killed or wounded in the two combats, and the rest threw down their arms and cried for quarter.

A dozen or thereabouts, chiefly officers, among them the two Yankee captains, stood in a compact phalanx close to the heel of the bowsprit.

Stanton Glynn, with difficulty keeping back his men, advanced towards them.

"Gentlemen, surrender, if you please ; resistance is useless."

"Come on, all of you rebels ! You took us by sur-

prise; but we are not done yet," cried the captain of the Mohican, furiously. "At them again, men. Don't give up; we'll drive them into the sea yet."

But though he looked for a response to his words among the remnant of his men still on deck, he looked in vain.

Those who still had arms in their hands threw them down one by one.

"Come," cried the captain of the Fiery Cross, "disarm, or your blood be on your heads. My men are in no humour to be trifled with."

And as if in confirmation of his words, two or three shots were fired, and again there arose shouts of anger among the rebels.

The captains and officers of the two Yankee vessels took the hint, and threw down their swords on the deck sullenly, and with bitter hate gleaming in their eyes.

"Handcuff them," shouted Stanton Glynne. "Not a man among them shall be paroled."

Several sailors advanced gladly enough, and handcuffs having been provided from the Yankee's own stores, the task of manacled the surrendered officers was quickly proceeded with.

"This you call civilized warfare, I suppose, to put officers in irons and refuse parole? But what can be expected from a set of cowardly pirates?"

Loud murmurs of indignation arose among the rebel crew at this insulting speech on behalf of the Yankee captain.

Stanton Glynne went close up to the discomfited captain of the Mohican.

"As to what you say, sir, about parole, I reply it is your own fault. Had you come forward respectfully as officers honourably defeated, and tendered your swords, you would have been treated as gentlemen and your paroles taken. But as you chose to fling your swords on the deck in a contemptuous and insulting manner, you shall be put in irons, and remain in irons till I think fit to get rid of you. As to what you say about pirates, you had better beware. My men are in no amiable mood. For weeks we have been subjected to insults, taunts, and

a system of espionage from you most galling to us. If, then, you insult us further by calling my brave fellows cowardly pirates, it may be the worse for you. So I warn you to keep civil. It ill becomes a captain of a vessel defeated and captured by one half the size to talk of cowardice. If you are kept in captivity till the end of the war it will probably be a good thing for you—save you from being court-martialled, and executed, perhaps, for the loss of your ship. The Yankees are not particularly merciful to officers who bring disgrace and defeat on their arms.”

Every word of this speech was bitterly galling to the Yankee captain, but observing the lowering looks of the rebel seamen, he judged discretion to be the better part of valour, and held his tongue.

As much of all this as could be seen Enoch Allen witnessed from his window. Of course, he could not see all the details as here described.

He stamped, swore, and danced about the room with rage as he saw the hated rebels board the Mohican, and step by step gain possession of the deck. The Nantucket was in full blaze all the time, so that had it been broad daylight the fight could not have been seen more distinctly, and certainly would not have appeared so grand. When the *finale* came, and after the surrender of the officers, he saw the Confederate flag ascend to the peak of the rebel, a perfect volley of oaths broke from him.

For weeks he had been planning to get the Fiery Cross within range of the Yankee's guns, and now, behold! the audacious rebel takes the United States sloop by the board.

He vented his rage on John Allen, and commenced to do so on Juliana, but that young lady, exhilarated and inspired by the triumph of her lover's vessel, turned a grily to bay.

“Sir, do you know whom you are addressing? Because you have the honour to be connected with my family by marriage with my aunt, you do not thereby acquire any right over me.”

“You are pretty saucy, Miss Julie, I think,” he said.

"It strikes me that you know something about this; that that d—— rebel scum as lit the lanterns and escaped by the window is no stranger to you, and came with your knowledge."

"Scum yourself, you mean-spirited huckstering Yankee!" cried Juliana, passionately. "How dare you speak thus to me? What if I do know him—that is my business, and not yours. He is a gallant officer and a gentleman."

"Then you do know him?" cried Enoch, angrily.

"Yes, I do; and tell you to your face, you old money-grubber, that you are not worthy to clean his boots—no, though you were to go down on your knees."

Enoch Allen was white with passion, but he was too much taken aback by the sudden fury of the usually gentle Julie to act.

The girl's Spanish blood was now up. The insult to her lover had fired her soul, and she felt as though she could willingly stab her uncle with her bodkin.

"After this, Mr. Enoch Allen, I remain no longer under your roof. Think not that because I have no relations I have no friends. Unlock the door, sir, and let me pass out to my room. If you do not, or dare insult me, I will find champions—half a score of Spanish gentlemen who will have your dastard life, spite of your belonging to the bullying, braggart Yankee Republic."

He said never a word, but unlocked the door.

She sailed out, looking him defiantly in the eyes as she did so.

"What a tigress!" Enoch said after she had gone. "I did not know the girl had so much spirit."

"You have ruined my chance with her," said John, dolefully. "Good-bye; all hopes of Juliana Cordova and her fortune."

"That is not so certain; women soon change their mind—curse her! I wish she were at the devil, fortune and all. To think that the treacherous slut should actually dare to concoct a scheme to admit one of this hord of pirates to my house. Would to heaven I could catch him!"

"Why, what could you do, uncle? You know the

authorities here are not particularly friendly. It is doubtful whether you could get him punished. It would be looked upon by the dons as a good joke—a dashing exploit.”

“By Jove! if I do catch him I’ll let him know it’s not a joke. I’ll send him to the United States to have him tried there, sure as my name’s Enoch Allen. If that cursed pirate does come in here again, and he goes on shore, by thunder! I’ll have him kidnapped by force. But I’ll talk of that another time. What are these piratical devils going to do now?”

He went back to the window, and again taking his glass, looked through it at the two vessels, the captor and the captured, on both which now floated the Confederate flag.

The Nantucket still burned fiercely, so there was no lack of light.

On board the Mohican the work of putting the prisoners in irons was being proceeded with. This was a necessary, if unpleasant business, as the united crews of the two Yankee vessels outnumbered the rebels more than two to one.

When all had been made safe on that score, about sixty of the prisoners having been transferred on board the Fiery Cross, a prize-crew was put on board the Mohican, and again a council was held in the cabin of the Fiery Cross.

The two vessels lay by the burning wreck, now fast being consumed by the flames, all night, and Enoch Allen wondered what the rebels were going to do next.

Tired out with watching, he at last resolved to go to bed, leaving directions to be waked at sunrise, from which time it only wanted three hours.

When the orb of day arose, he shone on the blackened hull of the Nantucket, and the two steamers lying beside her.

Enoch Allen was awakened even before he was called by his servant by the report of a cannon.

“What! more fighting?” he cried, as leaping from his bed he hastily attired himself, and hurried to see what was doing.

But it was not a combat which met his eyes, out a sight far more exasperating to the Yankee Consul.

Stanton Glynne was not satisfied with the proficiency of his crew with the great guns, so resolved to give them some practice.

Accordingly, he offered a prize of a thousand dollars to be divided among the men working the running gun.

As a target, he caused the stars and stripes, the Yankee ensign, to be raised on the stump of the vessel's mainmast.

The two vessels were hauled off to the distance of a mile, and the practice began.

It was glorious fun to see the round shot bounding and ricocheting over the waves, sending a column of water high in air at one time, at another crashing into the blackened hulk, once the U.S. steam-ship Nantucket.

It seemed likely that the wreck would be sunk before the flagstaff was shot away, but after an hour's firing the stars and stripes, struck by a lucky shot, fell on to the blackened hulk, which also shortly afterwards sank.

A tremendous cheer greeted the fall of the hated flag, the thousand dollars were handed over to the fortunate gunners, and then all the prisoners having been removed on board the Fiery Cross, that vessel was headed once more for the port, which she entered as a conqueror, having caused the destruction of one and captured another of the enemy's vessels in one night.

The whole population of Cienfuegos turned out to witness the triumphant return of the daring rebel.

Thundering acclamations greeted her as she came to anchor in her old place. Ladies waved their handkerchiefs, men fired pistols, and shouted till they were hoarse, in honour of the Confederate steamer.

Never had there been such a scene of excitement in the town in the memory of the oldest inhabitant.

Every breast on board the conquering little craft glowed with pride at this well-deserved ovation.

Even the wounded feebly waved their hands, and essayed a faint answering cheer to the loud plaudits from on board the hundreds of boats which quickly surrounded the ship.

Bitter, indeed, were the feelings of the Yankee

prisoners—awhile back so boastful and insolent, now woe-be-gone and crestfallen, as they well might be.

Stanton Glynne was about going ashore to visit the governor of the port, and confer with him on certain matters, when that official himself came alongside, and being received at the gangway with all honours, was conducted into the cabin, where he and the Confederate commander had a long private talk.

Here we will for the present leave them.

CHAPTER XXII.

AFTER CALM COMES STORM.

ENOCH ALLEN watched the target practice at the Federal flag with rage, which he did not attempt to conceal. He paced up and down like an angry hyæna, and when the stars and stripes finally fell, and the distant cheers of the rebels were borne on the morning air, he shook his fist, and swore fiercely.

He waited till he saw the Fiery Cross steam triumphantly into the harbour, which she had lately left secretly at dead of night, and then he said to his nephew—

“Come with me out into the grounds, John; I feel stifled—I cannot sit still. I will talk to you there, and tell you what I propose with regard to that d—— villain who entered my house last night like a thief.”

John followed the Consul, and the two were soon pacing up and down one of the ornamental walks cut through the shrubbery.

Enoch Allen chose to promenade a certain path, which for about twenty-five yards commanded an uninterrupted view of the sea.

Walking backwards and forward along this space of a hundred feet, he kept glancing every few seconds seawards.

His thoughts might have been easily guessed.

He looked from the captured Mohican quietly lying to with the rebel flag at her peak out to the distant horizon, and as he looked, he longed and prayed to see the smoke of a Yankee squadron which should arrive in time to relieve the disaster and avenge the disgrace suffered by the flag.

But he looked in vain.

As to what they talked of, that will be told by and bye.

Juliana Cordova was startled by the same cannonade which had awakened Enoch Allen.

She had not slept all night.

Her anxiety concerning her lover's fate—the thought which would present itself that he might be lying in pain, faint from the loss of blood, and unable to seek aid—perhaps in the very shrubbery which gave him shelter before his bold attempt—haunted her, and effectually barred the approach of the drowsy god Somnus.

Just before sunrise, however, she had sunk into an uneasy doze, but started up instantly at the sound of the guns.

Running to the window from which there was a view of the sea, she was reassured by seeing it was caused by no fresh fight.

However, to think of sleep was now out of the question, so she proceeded to attire herself.

Her toilet was neither long nor elaborate, and in half an hour she was dressed—her beautiful hair looped around her head in heavy braids; and taking a Spanish hat she descended and went out.

"Perhaps he is even now lying, wounded, in the shrubbery," she said to herself, and forthwith made her way there.

She saw the place where he had jumped down, evident enough by the marks of his feet; and a shudder passed through her as she observed several splashes of blood on the ground.

Then she commenced to search the shrubbery, following the tracks of his feet as well as she could. But the ground soon became harder, and she lost this guide, and wandered about at random.

Enoch Allen usually slept late, and she had no thought or fear of his being about.

Great then was her surprise as she heard his voice, and that of John.

They were approaching her, that was certain, so she hastily concealed herself behind a thick clump of shrubs, resolved to wait till they had passed, and then make her way back to the house.

They passed her it is true, but just as she was thinking of gliding away as noiselessly as possible, a word or two of their conversation fell on her ear.

She listened intently.

"I tell you he's sure to come ashore. Both the vessels are a good deal injured. The bulwarks of the Fiery Cross are stove in where she ran into the other, and you can see from here that the pumps are going continually on board the Mohican. They'll put in here to refit, and with certainty stay a week, not expecting that any more of our ships will be here yet awhile. He's bound to come ashore, and then I'll fix him."

"How will you do it?" asked John. "I must own I should be glad to see him put out of the way, for I'm afraid there's no doubt that Juliana has made his acquaintance, and knows something of this affair of last night."

"Of course she does, the sly slut! How will I fix him? Well, I will tell you. The rebels must have at least two hundred prisoners—wounded and all. Now they will want to get rid of them, and request permission from the governor to put them on shore. He will send to me to inquire if I will guarantee to support them until they can be sent home. Of course I shall say yes, for my instructions bear me out.

"Then you see I shall have two hundred men to find in food and lodging. Of course, their comfort will depend upon me. They will feel deadly hostile to the rebels who have sunk their ship and made them prisoners. These men will do anything I tell them."

"And how do you propose to employ them?"

"You are infernally dense and stupid, John. How do I propose to employ them? Why, in getting hold of this insolent vagabond that dared break into my house and tamper with my signals. I'll have him hanged for it, as sure as my name is Enoch Allen."

"But what the deuce will you do with him? Surely you won't hang him on your own responsibility?"

"Well, no," replied the Consul, slowly; "that would be hardly safe. Though I should like to it, I darn't do that. I shall send him to the United States, where he will be tried for burglary and attempted murder—murder perhaps; for I think there's a chance of one of the niggers he wounded dying. I do hope he may—then

Mr. Rebel Pirate's fate is sealed. I think he'll die—hope he'll die."

Said John, in reply to this amiable and humane wish—

"No ; the beggar won't die. These niggers never do from an injury, unless you stave their skulls right in or cut them in two, or something of that sort."

"Well, anyhow, I think I can make out a case strong enough for him to be hanged, if laid before a United States' court."

"But how will you manage about jurisdiction? The court takes no cognisance of offences committed in foreign countries."

"Oh, that is easily arranged," replied the other, coolly. "An offence committed on board a United States' vessel is held to be the same as an offence committed on United States territory. Now I shall maintain that the United States Consulate is in the same position as a vessel, and that, therefore, this fellow was guilty of attempted murder, and any other crime I can think of, within the jurisdiction of the United States."

All this Juliana heard. Her ears greedily drank in every syllable.

The speakers had been standing still for a short time, but now they moved on, and what they said she could not clearly gather.

"Well, what will you do with him when you do get hold of him?"

"Do with him? Why, put him where I can find him when I want him. Can't you guess?" (here she missed a few words) "roof . . . all safe—no one dream where he is—matter of that—no consequence."

Now they approached the spot where she was concealed.

"Yes," said John, slowly, "that seems feasible enough; but Juliana must not have an inkling of it."

"Oh, as for Juliana, I expect she'll take her hook to-day. I shan't try to stop her, though I believe in law I can as her guardian. The Spanish law on that point is different from ours."

"Well, but look here, uncle," the nephew put in, hotly.

"I want you to help me in this matter. I'm willing to do anything you please as regards the other affair, but I don't want Juliana to go. I should like to see this fellow hanged or put out of the way somehow, as I believe he stands in my way. I can't afford to lose the chance of Juliana. Just remember the property she'll have. We musn't let that go out of the family if we can help it."

"Well, well; we'll see about that. She can stay if she likes, or go. I shan't try to force her. I hate the sight of her, and, besides, I don't want a quarrel with a fiery vixen, such as she is."

"Look here, uncle; it don't suit me for Juliana to go off in a rage. You make your peace with her, and I'll do anything you wish."

"Humph! I don't like it; besides, she'll be in the way. She's got sharp eyes and ears too, confound her. However, I'll see."

"She never need know anything about it," said John; "besides, if she did, the place is strong enough to stand a siege."

"Well, well, I'll think of it. I shall go in to breakfast now."

He took a last longing look out to sea for that Yankee squadron which did not come, and then uncle and nephew walked away.

Juliana crept quietly round and entered the house by the back.

"The place is strong enough to stand a siege. What place? All I can fathom at present is that it is where they are going to imprison my George. Ah! but they shall not. I'll find him and warn him. They shall not kidnap him and imprison him. Ah! now I remember—'the roof.' I heard that. What roof? The roof of this house? Yes. Now I have it. I know there are strong rooms with windows opening out on to the roof—the flat part of the roof. That is where Enoch Allen keeps documents, and specie, and all valuables. That is where they mean to imprison him, but I will defeat them. I—a woman—will battle with these two men. I will use the weapons nature has given me, a woman's weapons—speech, tears, and beauty."

Juliana knew that she was beautiful. What woman that is so does not?

She made her toilette elaborately, and went down to the breakfast table.

She took her seat in silence. Her usual seat was next to her aunt, at the head of the table, on one side—John Allen on the other, opposite Enoch.

She looked sad and gloomy enough; and when asked what she would take, refused everything, contenting herself with a cup of coffee.

There was none of the indignant, angry fire in her look and demeanour, so conspicuous on her last interview with Enoch Allen.

She was no longer defiant—only sad and forlorn-looking.

The Consul noting this, thought that her defiance of him on the previous night, her anger, and her dauntless demeanour were caused by sudden passion, and that now the storm had passed over, she was gentle and quiet as usual.

So, for many reasons, he thought it advisable to conciliate her. He did not allude to what had passed, wishing to make her understand that all was forgotten and forgiven; but pressed her to eat in a grave, quiet way—not particularly gracious, but still without acerbity.

John, too, also, did his best, and endeavoured to enter into conversation.

She did not repulse him, but made very short replies, yet without seeming rudeness.

Altogether, she gave her uncle and nephew the impression that she was unhappy, and felt her own weakness and inability to contend against her guardian—her only male relative.

Her aunt—a mild, kind-hearted, weak-minded lady—saw nothing of all this.

“She will do,” said Enoch; “that flare up last night was too much for her. She overstrained herself, and has broken down utterly.”

“She certainly was very quiet and civil,” said John, doubtfully. “I was only thinking whether she wasn’t

too much so. After a calm there comes a storm, you know."

"Yes; but this is the calm after the storm, not before it."

For the present no more was said, and each of the three—Enoch Allen, his nephew and Juliana, went their respective ways

CHAPTER XXIII.

CAPTAIN GEORGE'S FARTHER ADVENTURES.

THE Mohican still continued to come to and fro off the harbour, exactly as she had done before, with this slight difference, that she was now commanded by a Confederate officer and manned by a Confederate crew.

She was not brought into the harbour for an obvious reason. It was necessary first to obtain the sanction of the Spanish authorities thereto—as if they declared it illegal to bring a prize into the port, they might go yet farther, and detain the said prize.

Now the Mohican was a splendid vessel, well built, well armed, and far superior in every respect to the little Fiery Cross.

So the valuable prize was kept outside for orders. No flag flew from her peak now. It was not advisable to fly the Confederate flag in case of a Yankee cruiser coming up; in which case it would be possible once more to deceive the enemy, and lead them to believe that the Mohican was still sailing under "Uncle Sam's" orders.

We will now follow for a while the fortunes of the lieutenant of the Fiery Cross—the Englishman, Captain George, who had made the daring attempt to delude the enemy by false signals—an attempt which, though it did not succeed in the manner anticipated, yet bore good fruit; for had it not been for the knowledge that it was to be made, the rebel vessel would never have ventured to run out, would never have been mistaken by the captain of the Nantucket for the Mohican, and, as a consequence, the former could not have been destroyed nor the latter captured.

After leaping from the window of the Consulate he lost not a moment in seeking the shelter of the shrubs, which fortunately were abundant. It was well for him that there was no immediate pursuit, owing to the state of

panic into which all concerned were thrown by the rapid and reckless discharge of his pistol among them.

Though shaken by the fall, and suffering great pain from the wound he had received, he yet managed to crawl away from that dangerous neighbourhood, and in a few minutes was at a sufficient distance to feel comparatively safe.

After consideration he resolved to lie quiet and await the issue of events.

He was to meet his fair ally Juliana on the following afternoon under any circumstances.

That had been previously arranged between them; and though he felt by no means certain that the discovery of the false signal scheme, and the consequent fracas would not compromise her, and render it impossible for her to keep the tryst, he determined that he would be there. Although things looked very gloomy and unfavourable, he did not quite despair of the result.

True, that owing to the alteration of the signals (in which he thoroughly believed) the Mohican had been despatched on the direct track of the Fiery Cross. Nevertheless it was not a certainty that the Yankee would catch her; and even succeeding in that there was still the fortune of war to be considered.

It was possible, though the odds were so heavily against her, that the Fiery Cross might succeed in crippling the enemy and effecting her escape.

Intense then was his anxiety and suspense when the thunder of the cannon broke on his ears. At first he could make nothing out in the darkness save the faint outline of the two vessels by the momentary flash of the guns. But when flames broke out on board the Nantucket and lighted up the scene, then his quick eye made out that it was not the Fiery Cross with which the Mohican was exchanging broadsides. Of this he was quite certain, but still was utterly at a loss to understand what was happening before his eyes.

When, however, the desperate attempt to take the Mohican by board was made by the crew of the paddle steamer, then there dawned on his mind a suspicion of the truth.

"There must be some mistake. Yonder is the Mohican, but the other vessel—it is not the Fiery Cross. A Yaukee, by all that's holy!"

This was what passed through the mind of Captain George.

Lookers on see most of the game is an old and true saying.

What the combatants in the excitement of battle did not discover, though almost alongside of each other, the spectator on the hill did. He recognised by the momentarily increasing glare of the flames the uniform of the Federal Navy on board the Nantucket.

And shortly, to confirm this view of the case, the wounded lieutenant presently saw another vessel emerge from the gloom and bear down on the Mohican at full-speed.

In an instant he recognised the Fiery Cross, and fully realized the mistake that had been made, and what might probably be the result thereof.

For a time the pain of his wound and his own danger were alike forgotten in the excitement which the view of the fight caused in his mind.

It was with difficulty he could avoid shouting aloud as he saw the successful and audacious attack of the rebel on the Yankee sloop, and watched the latter taken by board.

So intent was he on the combat and its results, that he forgot to provide for his own safety, and failed to take advantage of the mantle of night in order to regain the town.

It was broad daylight when he again trod the streets of Cienfuegos. He had seen the Fiery Cross enter the harbour, and watched for more than an hour the manœuvres of the Mohican cruising to and fro outside.

This delay on his part was unfortunate, for it happened that as he, with slow and halting step, by reason of his wound, toiled on towards the town, avoiding observation as far as possible by keeping out of the road, the negro servant of Enoch Allen, going to market to purchase provisions for the day's use, espied him.

He did not think it advisable to molest or attempt to

stop our friend; for, though wounded and lame, it was probable he was quite capable of using sword and pistol to effect.

But the man followed him and watched him into a barber surgeon's, where he went to have his wound dressed previously to going on board.

Then without waiting to do his business in town, the negro hurried back, and reported to his master that he watched the rebel pirate down.

Enoch Allen saw his chance.

"A message must be conveyed to him as though coming from Juliana," he said to his nephew; "he must be prevented going on board his ship."

"Will he believe it?"

"Yes, if it is properly managed. A glove or some token must be sent him. He will then believe it is a genuine message, and will walk into the trap."

"How is it to be done? He will surely be suspicious and careful."

The Consul thought for a little while, and having hit on a plan, unfolded it.

"Nothing can be done until Juliana leaves her room. Then it must be entered, some article of apparel, such as a glove, taken and sent to him, with a message to follow the bearer. In the meantime he must be informed at once that a message will be sent to him within a few hours, that it is necessary for his own safety he should remain where he is for some time. He will surely fall into the trap. I am convinced that that treacherous girl has a rendezvous with him somewhere. He must be prevented from keeping it and led astray."

The same negro who had followed the wounded man was despatched with a message to this effect, that the lady would send word presently where she would see him.

This conversation took place immediately after the morning meal, which was always at an early hour at the house of Enoch Allen.

Even as they concluded speaking, Juliana Cordova passed through the hall and went out, attired for walking.

"You take your walk abroad early, young lady," said Enoch, keenly regarding her.

"Yes, I have business in the town," she replied, curtly.

"Humph."

No more was said, her uncle-in-law being well aware that he had no power at the present to coerce her.

"She cannot know where this confounded pirate is at the present moment," John said; "but, as you say, without doubt they have arranged a rendezvous where they will meet in the course of the day."

"Now, you nigger, off you go to the surgeon's you watched our man into. Deliver your message, and come back full speed for further orders."

The negro started off on his errand, and John went on to say—

"I tell you what would make a certainty of it, uncle."

"A certainty of what?"

"That he would believe the next message we send came from her, and would follow the bearer. I have no doubt whatever that she saw him yesterday; she was out nearly all day. You have observed she always wears a few flowers in the front of her dress. I have noticed that she is very careful of them, and always places them in water when she comes in from a walk. He would almost certainly have taken notice of them, and if they were sent to him as a token from her, would certainly accept them as such."

"A good idea. Where are they?"

"If I mistake not, in the room she uses, not her bed-chamber, but the one looking out on the east. I will go and seek them."

In a few minutes John Allen returned with a small bouquet of flowers, a little faded, for she had worn them all the previous day.

"If he does not recognise them he is blinder than I take him to be. He will, on receipt of these, follow the bearer and walk unsuspectingly to where we choose he should be led. What course do you propose?"

"Send him to where there are a dozen or so of men I can depend on—have him seized, bound, and conveyed to the strong room at the top of the house. I'm very much mistaken if he does not grace a gallows ere two

months are over. The insolent scoundrel, to break into my house like a thief in the night ! ”

Uncle and nephew indulged in some bitter vituperation of their intended victim, matured their plan, and then waited for the fitting opportunity.

As Enoch Allen had predicted, the authorities sent up to the Consulate to inquire whether in the event of the Federal prisoners being put on the shore at the fort, the Consul would guarantee their support until they could be sent to their own country.

The reply to this was not at first definite, the American Consul in a long and verbose letter promising to give the subject his most earnest consideration, and in the meantime expressing a wish to see some of the captured officers, and learn from them the exact state of the case.

This was communicated to the commander of the Fiery Cross, who, after a brief consultation, permitted one of the Yankee captains—he of the Mohican—and two lieutenants to go ashore, in order to communicate with their Consul.

The interview between these officers and the astute Enoch Allen resulted as the latter expected.

After consenting to guarantee the support of the captured crew when put on shore from Government resources, the Yankee Consul proceeded to relate the audacious attempt to tamper with the signals, and wound up by informing the defeated officers that the rebel officer concerned in the outrage was at that time ashore in Cienfuegos—indeed, under the eye of himself, where he could at any moment put his hand upon him.

Burning with rage, bitterly mortified at the disastrous turn events had taken, the Federal commander instantly proposed that the “pirate” officer should be made a prisoner.

“By Heaven! we’ll hang him, sir—we’ll hang him!” he vociferated, and evidently meant it.

“I think to execute him on our own responsibility would be going too far. I doubt not, however, that by keeping him in confinement until opportunity offers to send him north we shall be doing quite right. I have no doubt that, backed by my statement on oath, and that of

my nephew here, the rebel will be tried on a charge of burglary and attempted murder, and doubtless executed. A few examples of the kind are wanted, and may serve to scare these miserable pirates from the seas."

So it was settled that the rebel officer should, if possible, be inveigled away from the immediate vicinity of the town, made a prisoner, and safely incarcerated in the strong room of the consulship.

The Consul having guaranteed their maintenance, the prisoners were in due course put on shore, and went up in a body to the house on the hill where floated the stars and stripes.

A great many of the men were drunk, and all were ripe for any mischief. Oaths and threats, loud and fierce, were heard against the "rebel pirates," and there is no doubt that, could they have their way, it would fare ill with any Confederate officers or seamen who might fall into their power.

But a riotous affray did not suit the purpose of the Yankee Consul. Before permitting the captured crew to be put on shore, the governor of the town insisted on a guarantee from the Consul that no acts of violence should be committed by them while they remained on Spanish territory.

It was moreover distinctly intimated that in case of a breach of neutrality, or any attempt or attack on the Confederate ship or men while in the port, that the wrongdoers would be fired on by Spanish troops, and at once captured and consigned to prison.

Now the possible seizure of the rebel officer which the Consul contemplated was, of course, in direct opposition to the guarantee he had given.

This he of course knew, but calculated on being able to effect the outrage without its becoming known.

Meanwhile the town was all excitement and enthusiasm. The Fiery Cross was surrounded by a perfect shoal of boats, and cheering by men, waving of handkerchiefs by ladies was the order of the day, greatly to the disgust of the discomfited Yankees. There were many reasons for this state of feeling among the townspeople, among which were the previous arrogance of the

Federals, and the audacity of the Confederate tactics, now crowned with success.

Of course, on board the little rebel vessel there was unbounded joy and elation. So soon as the prisoners were landed, the captain called a council of his officers, but though some important proposals were made, it was resolved to adjourn the discussion until the first lieutenant should again have joined. Now that victory had declared so signally on their side, it was expected that he would come on board at the earliest opportunity. When, therefore, hour after hour passed on and still no signs of the Englishman, there was considerable anxiety on board as to his fate.

Could he have been wounded, killed, or made prisoner by the enemy?

There was no possibility of answering this question. All that could be done was to wait.

At five o'clock in the afternoon a lady came alongside the Fiery Cross in a shore boat.

She was received by Stanton Glynne himself at the gangway, for he recognised her as Juliana Cordova, the intimate friend, to say no more, of the missing lieutenant.

"I wish to see your first lieutenant," she said, in an agitated tone of voice.

"I also should much like to see him, but he is not on board, I am sorry to say. Do you know, I hoped you had brought news of him."

"Can I see your captain?"

"You are now addressing the commander of this ship, *senorita*," Stanton Glynne said, bowing. "Will you walk into the cabin?"

Leading the way, he conducted the young lady there, where she at once began to express her fears that something had happened to Captain George.

"Oh, sir, there was a terrible affair at the Consulate last night. He was discovered in the large room, and my uncle-in-law attempted to arrest him. He was wounded by a pistol-shot, but I hoped not seriously, as he contrived, nevertheless, to escape. But now I am greatly alarmed. He appointed to meet me at three o'clock this afternoon. It is now five. I have been

waiting at the rendezvous for two hours, when it struck me that he might have considered it his duty to come on board his ship, and been unable to leave again. I fear, from his non-appearance, that he must be badly wounded, or, at any rate, that something has happened to him."

Stanton Glynne looked as he felt—deeply concerned.

"I really do not know what to do—what action to take. Can you suggest anything, *senorita*?"

"I think it possible that his wound may have been of a more serious character than it at first appeared. He may have become faint from loss of blood, and unable to proceed far. He may have fallen, and be still lying disabled somewhere near the house. It is time I had searched; but the grounds are large, and thickly sprinkled with bush and shrubs. I would suggest that a search be instituted by a considerable number—an armed party; for the town is full of the seamen of your enemy; many of them drunk—all disposed to be riotous."

Stanton Glynne started to his feet.

"By Heavens! you are right, young lady! I should have thought of it before. Lieutenant Wharncliffe!"

That officer quickly made his appearance, and, bowing to Juliana, stood awaiting the orders of his commander.

"You will take twenty seamen, Lieutenant Wharncliffe, armed, and institute a search for our missing friend, the first lieutenant. Search well the vicinity of the American Consul's house, and the road leading thereto from the town. My brother, Captain Hubert Glynne, will do likewise with a guard of his marines. No more liberty men to go ashore. If unfortunately the first lieutenant has fallen into the hands of these Yankees, he must be reclaimed, and at all hazards—by force, if necessary. I shall remain on board. Report to me instantly that you have any news of him."

"Ay, ay, sir. Shall I inform the captain of marines of your orders?"

"Yes, at once. No more liberty men to go on shore. How many have you?"

"Twenty, sir."

"Order them back to the ship. I think it quite possible there may have been treachery at work. If so, we

must be prepared to fight, if necessary. It will never do to sail from here without our lieutenant, nor will it do to wait till the news of what has happened brings a whole Yankee squadron down on us."

"I am quite sure that if something serious had not prevented him, he would have kept his appointment with me. I was the more anxious to see him to warn him against the plots of his enemies."

"You have, then, knowledge of some plot against him?"

The girl coloured. Even in the interests of her lover she revolted from the thought of revealing to one almost a stranger the treachery of her uncle-in-law, she living at the time beneath his roof.

"Yes; but until I have reason to believe it has been carried into effect, I would rather say no more on the subject."

"Stand back! You cannot pass here without permission."

It was the challenge of the sentry at the cabin door.

"Shure and I want to spake to his honner the captin."

There was no mistaking the voice of Darby Kelly.

"Stand back! You must report through an officer."

"Shure and it's about an officer. I've been tould that there's to be a sarch for the first lieutenant, more power to him. I'd like to spake to the captin, for I met him a while back follerin' a naygur wid a bunch of flowers in his hand."

"Let that man pass," cried Stanton Glynne, and the next minute the herculean Irishman stood before the lady and the rebel commander.

"You have news of the first lieutenant?" asked the latter.

"I saw him wid my own eyes not a quarther hour ago, and spoke to him, yer honner."

"Ha! In which direction was he going?"

"Up the hill, towards the house where the flag flies, on'y more to north."

"Was he alone?"

"There was a naygur going with him, a little in front. His honner carried a bunch of flowers, and walked

impin'. Says I to him, 'Can I be of any sarvice; shure yer honner walks laim; are yez hurt?' 'Nothing much, Darby,' he sez. 'I am going a little way to keep an appointment. Tell the captin I'll be on board in an hour or two.' And wid that he walks on, just giving a pleasant smile, and putting the flowers in the breast of his coat."

"An appointment!" cried Juliana, in genuine astonishment. "Where could he have been going? The road this man describes leads into the interior of the island. I cannot conceive with whom he could have had an appointment."

"With a friend, one would suppose," the young commander said; "for Darby here says he was quite cheerful in his manner."

"Or with an enemy," said Juliana, quickly. "The more I think of it the more fearful I am that there is treachery at work. Ha! a thought strikes me. Those flowers. Can you describe them?" This question to Darby Kelly.

"There was a big red flower, and some little white ones, and a lot o' green leaves."

"Ah!" she cried, "it is as I thought—my flowers—my yesterday's bouquet. I remembering his admiring them. He would certainly remember them. I see it all now. He has been watched into or seen in the town, and a message has been sent to him with those flowers purporting to come from me. He would recognise them, and follow the bearer to his destruction."

"You do not imagine that it is intended to murder him?" cried Stanton Glynne, aghast.

"Perhaps not at once—not directly; but I have reason to believe that they intend to imprison him till there is an opportunity of sending him to the United States for trial."

"For trial! on what ground?"

"I must tell you that I accidentally overheard a conversation this morning between Enoch Allen and his nephew. I must speak out now. He is in imminent danger, and it is no longer a time to be over sensitive. They are furious at the results of last night's battle, and

the Consul is especially incensed against your lieutenant for his audacity in forcing an entrance into his house and making signals. I heard them speak of making him prisoner, if possible, by the assistance of the Federal seamen, who would be landed, and confining him at the Consulate until there was an opportunity to send him home to a northern port for trial, on the charge (which, of course, Enoch Allen would warmly support) of burglary and attempted murder."

"Attempted murder! That was no part of his plan, I am sure."

"To effect his own escape, he fired at random among those who, alarmed by the noise, thronged the doorway, and would, had they not been intimidated, have seized him. He himself was wounded at the time, and with difficulty made his escape from the window. As sure as fate, if he follows the man who brought him the flowers, he will be betrayed into an ambush, and made a prisoner."

"By thunder!" cried Stanton Glynne, "this must be seen to. I'll lead a hundred men up to the house, and pull it down about the Consul's ears."

"Nay, first let us be sure that he is indeed a prisoner," cried Juliana. "Above all things caution and prudence are necessary."

"How can we find out?"

"I can ascertain, and will inform you. Within an hour I shall know whether he has indeed been treacherously captured or not. I am certain that if he is a prisoner, he is there."

"How will you let me know?"

"It will be dark in an hour's time," she replied. "You can see the Consul's house from your ship. Come, I will point it out to you."

So saying, she went on deck, followed by Stanton Glynne, much admiring her acuteness and decision.

"See there; observe one of those windows facing the east; that is my bedchamber. I can signal you from there."

"How?"

"Give me some rockets. I will send them up if I have good reason to believe that he is a captive."

"My lady, your courage and sense do you honour and put me to shame. It shall be as you say."

In a few minutes he placed in her hands a packet containing half a dozen signal rockets, and instructed her how to discharge them.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE DESPATCH TO THE MOHICAN.

IMPATIENT to be off on her errand, Juliana would not remain another moment, but entered the shore boat which had brought her, and was rowed to the wharf.

Meanwhile, what had passed was soon bruited about the ship.

Darby Kelly had heard her words, as had several others, and it was soon known that the first lieutenant was, in all probability, a prisoner at the Yankee Consulate.

Darby Kelly swore many furious oaths that he would pull the house down but what "his honner should be freed," and fore and aft the ship there prevailed a feeling of irritation, and a wish, at all hazards, to release the captured officer and avenge the outrage.

All hands, however, were confined to the vessel, and the captain felt that, under the circumstances, it was necessary to prepare for a *coup de main*—that is, if the kidnapped lieutenant was to be re-captured.

Many of the liberty men who had been found on shore and ordered on board by the officers were, in nautical terms, "half seas over," and those who had remained on board had, in spite of all precautions, received, through the mistaken kindness of the inhabitants who crowded around the rebel vessel in boats, a good supply of liquors, for the most part strong white rum.

Their blood was up, fired by excitement, success, and liquor. Stanton Glynne saw this with regret; as anticipating mischief, he would much rather have seen his crew cool, collected, and perfectly sober.

However, there was no help for it, and if the rockets shooting up from the bed-chamber window of Juliana Cordova should convey the intelligence that his first

lieutenant was there confined a prisoner, he determined at all costs to release him by force, and forthwith leave the harbour of Cienfuegos, in order to avoid any dispute with the Spanish authorities.

The parties sent out to search for the missing lieutenant returned, unsuccessful, shortly after dusk.

No tidings of him could be learned, though the vicinity of the Consul's house had been thoroughly ransacked.

Then there came conviction to the minds of most that he had been kidnapped, and was now a prisoner.

Measures were promptly taken at dusk for the expedition which might become necessary.

The utmost caution was observed, and all communication with the shore by means of boats rapidly put a stop to, for the enterprise which the commander of the Fiery Cross determined to carry out in order to release his lieutenant was clearly against the law.

Strictly speaking, he had no right whatever to land an armed party on Spanish soil, and proceed by force to search any place, even with the object of recovering an officer unlawfully kept prisoner.

The legal course would have been to apply to the Spanish authorities.

Well did Stanton Glynne know, however, that this under the circumstances would have been folly.

At any moment a Yankee squadron might appear, and certainly there would be one before long, so soon as ever the news of the capture of the Mohican and the destruction of the Nantucket reached the enemy.

So immediately after the departure of Juliana, a boat was sent to the Mohican with a despatch to the officer commanding the prize-crew, instructing him to keep a good look-out, for that probably the Fiery Cross would leave the harbour early in the night, on secret duty.

This having been done, all hands, officers and men, anxiously looked in the direction of the Consul's house for the rocket which should be the signal for action.

CHAPTER XXV.

JULIANA FIRES THE ROCKETS.

JULIANA returned to the house of Enoch Allen just at the dinner hour. Wishing to watch the demeanour and manner of the Consul and his nephew, she thought it advisable to take her seat with them at the table.

Their manner tended to confirm her in her idea that her lover had met foul play at their hands, and they could if they chose account for his not keeping his appointment. Previously to joining them, she had ascertained that the flowers she had left in her room in the morning had been abstracted.

This made her previous suspicions almost a certainty.

She hurried up to her bed-chamber after making this discovery, hid the rockets beneath her pillow, and then descended to the dining-room, striving her utmost to look composed and indifferent—a vain attempt.

They were as much struck by her manner and appearance as she was by theirs.

Juliana was a clever girl, brave and devoted, but a bad dissimulator. Her blood was too hot; her nature too hot and impetuous to render her a good hand at disguising the emotions which held sway in her breast. Her face was pale, her eyes unusually bright, while an occasional quiver of the lip and the anxious expression of her countenance betokened that she was ill at ease.

Enoch Allen wore on his features an expression of triumphant satisfaction. He drank freely, and once had the imprudence to fill his glass and, nodding significantly to his nephew, say—

“Here’s to our friend the reb——”

Juliana’s glance was sharp as lightning, and followed Enoch’s eyes as they were for a moment cast upwards.

This almost carried the conviction to her mind that it

was indeed as she suspected, and that Captain George was imprisoned, perhaps badly wounded, in one of the strong rooms upstairs. The thought of this almost overcame her prudence.

Enoch Allen saw her eyes flash, noted the flush which came to her pale cheeks, and in the insolence of his fancied triumph ventured to taunt her.

"You don't look easy in your mind, Juliana," he said. "I fear you have not enjoyed your walk this afternoon. You've been out a long time, too. Was the sun too much for you?"

"At all events, Mr. Enoch Allen, I am easy in my conscience," she said, indignantly. "I hope you can say as much."

"Well, yes, yes; I am, on the whole, content with my day's work. The disasters of the night were no fault of mine. I have done some service, if ever so slight a service, to our cause to-day."

"I don't choose to be taunted by you, Mr. Enoch Allen; so, as I have taken sufficient, I will leave you to your wine. Come, aunt."

But Mrs. Allen was much more submissive-minded than her niece. Her husband's strong will had long since overpowered hers.

So Juliana left the table alone.

They had no suspicion of her object and intention, however.

The girl was now half frantic with anger, excitement, and fear as to her lover's fate.

First she went to her own bed-chamber, and after having satisfied herself that the rockets—those precious signals which, if used, would bring assistance—were safe, she proceeded with some other investigations.

The two strong rooms, in one of which she believed her lover to be at that very time a prisoner, were situate, as we have before said, right at the top of the house. They were approached through a corridor, the entrance to which was guarded by a strong iron door. The doors of the rooms in question were of iron also, and trap-doors opened on to the roof from each.

As a rule, the large iron door at the entrance of the

corridor was left open, the others being considered as quite sufficiently secure.

But Juliana, on reaching this first door, found that it was locked, barred, and fastened.

When she observed this she felt in her own mind perfectly certain that there was an object in this, and that object to make assurance doubly sure—rendered it almost an impossibility for a prisoner to escape.

In the corridor itself there was yet another trap-door, a small one, and not easily accessible. It also opened on to the roof, and was not so strong as the two leading from the strong room; in fact, it would have been easier to force a passage through the roof itself than through either of these latter.

It is necessary that the reader should remember these particulars in order that what follows may be intelligible.

Juliana, when she had gained the unwelcome intelligence of the great door being secured, was for a moment or two at a loss, but her natural courage and impetuosity soon came to her aid. Vulgarly speaking, she had determined to take the bull by the horns; so, after once more assuring herself that the rockets were safe, she went down in the dining-room, and entering, summoned all her resolution, and walked right up to Enoch Allen, whom she looked full in the face while she spoke as follows:—

“I wish to go up on the roof. Will you let me have the keys?”

He was perfectly aghast at what he considered the cool insolence of this request.

“Go on the roof! What business have you there?”

“I wish to see some one who is imprisoned in one of those strong rooms. Where are the keys?”

“Well, I’m sure; if that isn’t the coolest, most cheeky thing I’ve ever heard in my life! Where are the keys? Why here they are, in the breast-pocket of my coat, and there they’ll remain. What the devil does the girl mean? Are you mad? Who told you there was any one up there? and if there is, I suppose it’s no business of yours.”

"No matter who told me or how I know. I ask you to give me the keys. I wish to ascertain for myself."

"I'll see you hanged first, you treacherous jade!"

"Your language is in keeping with your conduct, and well befits the hired agent of such a Government. I shall ascertain what I wish without your keys."

Thereupon she swept out of the room.

"Follow her!" cried John Allen; "she's up to mischief. Did you see how her eyes blazed?"

"Yes, by heaven! she's got some scheme in her head. Come with me. She may intend to pick the lock."

In hot haste the two hurried to the corridor, but Juliana was not there. The door was fast, and had evidently not been tampered with.

"She's gone to her own room," shouted Enoch. "She must be looked to; she's up to mischief. Follow me, John. I'll find out what her little game is."

When they arrived at the door of Juliana's bed-chamber it was locked.

Enoch Allen was now in a great state of excitement, white, and trembling with anger. Could he have done so easily, he would not have hesitated to break in the door, but, fortunately for Juliana, like all the others in the house, it was very solidly constructed, and to force it would be no easy matter.

Enoch Allen knocked as hard as he could with his hands, and kicked with his feet.

"Juliana!"

"Who's there?"

"It's I—Enoch Allen. Open the door this instant."

"This is my bedchamber," was the reply, "and I shall not open it for you or any man."

"If you don't, I'll force the door—I will, by heaven!"

There was no answer to this summons, but both those outside the door heard a strange and incomprehensible sound.

A rushing, hissing noise it was.

"What the devil's that?" cried Enoch.

"Can't say."

Again that singular sound.

"Juliana, if you don't open the door, I'll break it in."

"I shall not open the door until I am ready."

Again followed that sound.

Neither Enoch Allen nor his nephew guessed for a moment what caused it.

The Consul commenced kicking at the door, each moment with increasing violence.

Juliana's voice was now heard.

"If you break into my room I will kill you. I am armed."

"Be careful," whispered John. "If she is armed, she is just the girl to do it."

"Open the door, then," roared Enoch, "as I want to see what you are up to."

"I will when I am ready. This is my bedchamber. Break the door open at your peril!"

And as she ceased speaking, both of them distinctly heard a little "click."

"She's got a pistol," whispered John. "Better be careful."

Enoch evidently thought so too.

"I'll give you five minutes," he said; "if you don't open then, I'll have the door forced."

Again that strange sound was heard.

Whizz——rush——

And after an interval of a few seconds, again a sixth time.

"Now I will open the door," cried Juliana, and in an instant the lock was shot back, and it was thrown wide open.

She stood before them, in the centre of the room, an angry tigress, with her dark eyes glaring and her bosom panting.

In her right hand she held a small pistol, and looked as if she would not hesitate to use it.

"What want you? How dare you thus intrude on me in my chamber?"

"This is my house," said Enoch Allen, sullenly.

"Coward and blackguard! This shall be my last day beneath your hated roof. Dare you call yourself a man? No one could ever accuse you of being a gentleman, thus to force your way by threats into the bedchamber of a

lady, your wife's relation. Again, I repeat what I said, and call you a coward and blackguard!"

Enoch Allen was white with rage.

"What's all this smoke?" cried John.

They had not noticed it when first she threw the door open.

"Gunpowder smoke!" cried the Consul. "I see. You vixen! Now I see! You've been letting off rockets as signals to the rebels."

"Ha! ha! ha!" she laughed—a triumphant, scornful laugh—most galling to him. "Have you only just discovered that? Clever Consul, noble Yankee citizen, you are outwitted!"

He gave her a look like a fiend, and advanced a step or two towards her. It really seemed as though he were so overcome with fury as to be about to strike her.

She stood her ground firmly, and met his furious glare without flinching.

John Allen looked on in intent dismay. His uncle was the first to recover his self-possession.

"You have done your worst now, you vixen!" he hissed between his teeth. "I know that you have been signalling the enemy. If you hope to rescue your lover, now a prisoner above, you will be mistaken. You need not fancy that because one infernal rebel broke into my house like a thief in the night, that it shall be repeated with impunity. Fortunately, I have a score or two of brave Union sailors about. They will give a good account of any attempting rebel rescuers, if they dare come, which I don't believe."

Juliana's fiery nature was now fairly aroused, and she flung back taunt for taunt.

"They gave a very poor account of the 'rebels' last night, Consul Allen. One ship burned, another captured."

Her words and defiant demeanour drove him almost mad.

"You leave my house to-morrow, you traitress! I was a fool ever to have harboured such a serpent!"

"With all my heart. I am sorry I ever became a member of your household. It was for your own objects,

Consul Enoch Allen, you sought me, and right well I know it; so think not I owe you any gratitude."

"Come, John, let us make things sound and perfect, to give these ruffians a hot reception—that is, if ever they dare come, which I very much doubt."

Then followed by his nephew, who seemed quite unequal to the occasion, Enoch Allen set to work barricading all the windows of the house. This done, he went out at the back, where in an auxiliary building, used as kitchen and other offices, some twenty of the sailors of the captured vessels, the *Mohican* and the *Nantucket*, were being regaled.

He looked rather disappointed at observing how few there were, though previously he had groaned inwardly at the thought of the cost of feeding so many hungry mouths.

"Where are all the rest of your shipmates?" he asked. "I understood there would be fifty or sixty of you here, and had supper prepared accordingly."

As he spoke he glanced at the long table which had been prepared, not more than a quarter filled.

"They're all down about the town, sir; most of 'em have got money, and as they arn't had liberty for a good spell, I reckon they won't trouble you till it's all spent."

It was a grey-haired old quarter-master who spoke, and to him Enoch Allen addressed himself.

"Can you depend on all these men you have here with you?"

"Yes, sir, the main of 'em; there's two or three as has had a skinful, but they're all good men."

"Then come into the house and finish your grog there. I've reason to believe that an attempt may be made to rescue the prisoner we've put at the top of the house. If they do come, they'll get a hot reception, I reckon."

"I reckon they will, sir; leastwise, if you've got plenty of arms and ammunition, for we've got none to speak of, except an old cutlass and two or three six-shooters."

Unfortunately, although there were firearms in the house, there was a scarcity thereof, and the most that

could be mustered were about fifteen old ship's muskets and ten revolvers. Still, with these Enoch Allen thought it could be easy to beat off any force the rebels were likely to bring against him. He judged that they would attempt to gain their end rather by strategy and surprise than deliberate force.

Having got all the Yankee sailors within the house, he mustered his domestics, mostly negroes, and in all numbering ten, besides the women.

So that with himself and John he could count thirty-two defenders in case of attack, amply sufficient to hold the place till assistance should arrive.

"The lawless scoundrels!" he said to himself, grinding his teeth, "they shall have it hot and strong, if they do come."

He busied himself loading the muskets and revolvers, after having seen every possible window and door fastened up.

"I don't think they mean to make any attempt at all," said John; "that girl might have been only letting off rockets for fun, to annoy you."

"Don't believe anything of the sort, John; she ain't that sort of girl; she did it with deliberate purpose, you may depend. Those were signals to the enemy, and the meaning of them was that the prisoner was here. Now, if they were not going to act at once, they would not want to have the information at night. If they meant proceeding by complaining to the Spanish authorities, to-morrow would be ample time. Depend upon it, there's mischief afoot. Anyhow, I'll be prepared, for I don't mean to part with my gentleman up above just yet. That reminds me, I'll just go and see to his safety. Come with me, John, and be ready with your revolver; he's a desperate character. For my part, if he attempts any violence, I'll shoot him down like a dog."

Enoch Allen looked as if he meant it, and doubtless would have carried out his threat, for he was just in the humour.

He visited the prisoner in the strong room, leaving food and water, without deigning him a word. The Englishman on his part was not one to bark when he

could not bite. At the present he was powerless, for besides being wounded, he was without weapon of any kind.

His hope was that his comrades would discover where he was and rescue him. Now that it was too late, he saw how blindly he had walked into the snare.

Juliana was his great reliance. He thought it very improbable his being a prisoner in the house could be kept a secret from her. That young lady, unseen by Enoch and John, watched them as they ascended to the corridor, and watched them as they came down again.

She saw Enoch Allen with the keys in his hand, the great one of the large iron door, and the smaller ones of the strong rooms.

Now she wished she were a man. Even as a weak woman she felt tempted to rush forward and endeavour to possess herself of them.

But this, of course, would have been utter folly ; so she watched and waited. She saw him place all the keys in his breast-pocket, and button up his coat as if to keep them safer. She sighed, and though she said to herself, "At least I know where the keys are," could not derive much consolation therefrom.

But the fact was strongly impressed upon her mind .

The keys by which her lover's prison-doors might be caused to fly open were in the left-hand breast-pocket of the Consul's coat.

CHAPTER XXVL

THE FRAY AT THE CONSUL'S.

THE Fiery Cross lay silent and motionless in the harbour of Cienfuegos. To all appearance there was no sign of activity, or anything to denote that she was not going to lie thus all through that night, as she had so many others.

Neither the good people in the town, nor those on board the vessels in the harbour, could know that she lay moored only by a light hawser, waiting, like a greyhound in the slips, ready to be let loose.

A closer observer—one, for instance, who might be allowed alongside—would probably have noticed that her decks were crowded with men forward and aft, who gazed anxiously and persistently over the bulwarks. Also that smoke was slowly and sullenly streaming from her funnel, betokening that her fires were alight, and that in a very few minutes she would be under a full head of steam.

Inboard, her decks presented a lively and singular appearance. All the officers, except one, who stood on the bridge, were aft on the quarter-deck; and though some paced up and down, all, without exception, gazed anxiously in one particular direction.

But apparently they gazed in vain. Their conversation, carried on in low muttered tones, was all on the selfsame subject.

"This is most tantalizing," said Hubert Glynne to his brother, the commander. "I am longing for action and excitement. Will the promised signal never be given?"

"It is hard lines," replied Stanton Glynne. "I must say I look forward to the thought of paying out that confounded Consul for all his spying and dogging of us as a great treat. If I could only feel certain, I'd ransack

the house from top to bottom—ay, pull it down, but what I'd find my friend."

"Our fellows would not want even a hint to do that. They hate the very name of Consul Enoch Allen, and would like nothing better than to make his house a heap of ruins."

The crew, who were all on deck, lying and sitting in all positions in the waist and farther forward, muttered to themselves, and cast many and anxious glances in the same direction as the officers.

"Cuss it! why don't them rockets shoot up? Reckon I'm pretty tired of waiting."

"Ef I do get hold of that tarnation Counsel," growled a great Mississippi hoosier, "cuss me, ef I don't wring his neck like a rooster's."

These and many other remarks indicative of impatience and a fierce desire for action might be heard muttered in low tones, for the order for silence had gone forth.

There was a feverish restlessness pervading everybody on board, in part due to the terrible excitement of the previous night, in part due to the popularity of the kidnapped officer, and a desire to have a slap at the house of the much-hated Yankee "Counsel," as the sailors called him. All at once there arose a sharp, half-stifled cry fore and aft the vessel. Every man started to his feet and crowded the port bulwarks. The cry quickly grew more definite, and but for the strict orders to the contrary, and the officers calling out "Silence! fore and aft," a loud shout would have pealed forth from the deck of the rebel vessel.

As it was all was excitement and bustle, as rocket after rocket, to the number of six, were seen to soar up from the Consul's house.

"The appointed signal," cried Stanton Glynne. "That noble girl has ascertained to a certainty that our friend is imprisoned there. By thunder! we'll rescue him, if we pull the house about that infernal Consul's ears. To your posts, gentlemen! Cast off the hawser! Go ahead, full speed!"

This latter order was addressed to the officer on the

bridge, and in less than a minute from the time the last rocket soared up from Juliana's window the Fiery Cross was gliding rapidly out towards the open sea.

In the meantime the crew were told off into divisions, and armed with cutlasses and pistols, or muskets and bayonets. The marines, of course, carried the latter.

Ten minutes brought the little vessel right opposite the fort guarding the entrance to the harbour.

A faint cheer from the troops on duty here told that their sympathy was with the rebel privateer.

Out into the open sea stood the Fiery Cross. When clear of the harbour, she rounded to, and lay awaiting the approach of her consort, the captured Mohican, which could now be seen coming up in the gloom from the westward, her funnel pouring out a dense volume of black smoke.

She, too, had seen the rockets, and having been apprised that the ascent of these would be the signal for action, made all haste to lay herself alongside the smaller vessel, which may be called the flag ship of this squadron of two.

The night was a dark one, though there was a young moon, whose light, however, was nearly obscured by heavy clouds. There was just sufficient to make out dimly the outline of a vessel some four hundred yards off.

So soon as the Mohican was within hail, the order is shouted through the speaking trumpet by the young commander—

"Follow me, keep the lead going constantly, and stop her if the water shoals suddenly."

Then away went the Fiery Cross, steering to the eastward, followed by her larger consort.

At first some of the lights could be seen in some of the window's of the Consul's house, but these soon disappeared and all was darkness.

This was caused by Enoch Allen putting up all the shutters.

"I don't like the look of that," said Stanton Glynn to one of his officers; "it appeared as though they were preparing."

"Going to bed, perhaps."

"Scarcely so early as this."

The water now shoaled rapidly, and the vessel was put at half speed. The lead gave five and a half fathoms, with a sandy bottom.

When, as nearly as could be judged, abreast of the Consular House there was barely four fathoms, when the order was given to stop her, and the Mohican came slowly up and took her position about fifty fathoms on the lee quarter, so as to be in easy hail.

"Lower away your boats," was the order given to the officer in charge of the prize.

The boats of the Fiery Cross were lowered at the same time, and there was a little fleet alongside the vessel. Then the crews were told off, each to their respective boats, and in ten minutes from the time the vessels had brought up all were ready to start on this rescue expedition.

Fifty men only were left on board the two vessels, over a hundred having embarked in the boats.

Stanton Glynne was determined he would not fail in his object through insufficiency of force. Originally he intended only to have taken half as many, but the sudden vanishing of the lights at the house had excited his attention.

In case of necessity, or if by bad fortune there should be a considerable force to oppose them, the two vessels could cautiously open a fire of shells over their heads, and so greatly disconcert their foe.

All being in readiness, the word was, "Give way, men," and all the boats, seven in number, led by the launch, in charge of the captain, made for the shore, which was gained after a quarter of an hour's sharp pulling.

A landing was safely effected, and leaving a few men with the boats, the rest were divided into two columns, and the march for the Consular House commenced.

It was very dark, and the ground was rough, difficult, and uneven, but in the course of the evening it had been thoroughly reconnoitred, and there were several steady, cautious men who volunteered to pilot the expedition

right up to the grounds surrounding the house to be attacked. It was hard work, and the hill was not mounted without many a scratch and bruise ; but at last the heads of the two columns of men were at the light wood paling which surrounded the house.

Several planks were quickly cut out as noiselessly as possible, and then the two columns marched in. Then a whispered consultation was held, and the plan of attack decided on.

Pickaxes, crowbars, and a few short ladders had been brought, as also several bags of gunpowder, with fuses attached, to be used as petards, in order, if necessary, to blow in the doors.

Meanwhile a bright look-out was kept from the house by Enoch Allen himself, but he was not aware that the rebel vessel had left the harbour, and fully expected the attack, if there were to be any, would advance from the town.

Everything favoured the success of the undertaking—the darkness, the cover of the brushwood, and the unexpected direction in which they advanced.

When within a hundred yards of the house the word to halt was given in a low tone. Then the final dispositions were made for the assault.

Stanton Glynne determined that it should be short, sharp, and decisive, if possible.

He gave Wharnccliffe fifty men, with instructions to go round to the rear as silently as possible, and signify when he was there posted by firing a pistol. This was that no loophole for escape might be left. The young commander thought it quite possible that the prisoner might be smuggled out by the back way, and thus they would win a fruitless victory. He resolved that every avenue should be carefully guarded, and the house thoroughly searched for the missing officer, to recover whom was the object, more than to destroy the house.

That the latter would very likely follow, or that as the least it would be thoroughly gutted, he thought extremely probable, considering the existing temper of his men.

That was not a matter which gave him very much

concern one way or the other, so long as the one object was attained.

Cautiously and slowly Stanton Glynne leads his men, to the number of thirty-five, nearer and nearer to the house.

Hubert Glynne, at the head of his marines, followed closely behind.

The silence is unbroken, save by the occasional crackling of a twig or the sound of heavy footfalls.

All at once the report of a musket is heard.

One has gone off accidentally, and while they are yet full fifty yards from the house. Further concealment is out of the question. Those within the house are obviously on the *qui vive*.

They could hear the sound of tramping feet and shouts, and in a second or two several windows were thrown open.

The night was not so dark but that a body of men could be made out advancing, and very soon a sharp fire of musketry is opened from the now besieged mansion.

Some among the attacking party fire in return without orders, and this serves to point out clearly to those within the position and numbers of the assailants.

"Forward, my lads!" cries Stanton Glynne. "Let's take it with a rush."

And responding with a shout his followers came up to the great front door with a run.

Hitherto only one man has been wounded, and he slightly.

"Now, then, pickaxe and crowbar; down with the door!"

Darby Kelly wielded a huge pickaxe, while others worked with crowbars, and others again hammered away with the butt-ends of their muskets.

The door, however, proved tougher than was expected. The Irishman drove lots of holes in it, but it was crossed by bars of iron within, and moreover timber and furniture were being piled against it.

Musket-barrels were protruded, too, and fired through these holes, and though the like was done from without,

yet the assailants had the worst of this from being more exposed.

"Up with the ladders, some of you," cried Hubert Glynne; "quick! the first-floor windows are not so well guarded, I reckon."

The ladders were quickly planted, and he himself mounted first.

As he had predicted, the shutters of these windows yielded to repeated heavings with the iron bars and blows from butt-ends of muskets.

In a very short space of time the whole lower part was smashed in, and Hubert Glynne leaped into the room, followed by three of his marines, and shortly after by two friends.

They found themselves opposed to at least a dozen men, headed by Enoch Allen himself. These were the best and most trustworthy of the most Yankee sailors, and a desperate hand-to-hand conflict commenced.

Usually in an attack on any place fortified, or otherwise, when once the assailants get a footing they retain, each moment increases their advantage as others press on behind.

This was the case at first. Hubert and the five others who gained entrance to the room at first beat back the defenders.

One more joined the attacking party through the corridor, and they then stood as seven to twelve.

More, however, might reasonably be expected to enter every moment, as those who had come first guarded the window, and made the approach comparatively easy.

Inspired by the knowledge of this and the first success, the Confederates, led by stalwart Hubert Glynne, furiously attacked the foe.

Now the battle is waged in earnest. Yells, cries, oaths—the harsh clash of steel as cutlass meets cutlass, and occasionally the crack of the deadly revolvers, make up together a fearful din—the real old battle music.

Fast and furious is the fight.

Blood flows freely, and several measure their length on the floor—one of whom lies there stark and motionless, after a few struggles, to rise no more, for Hubert

Glynne's sharp sword, urged on with strong arm and fierce intent, passes right through his body.

The other two, one on each side, slowly crawl away, and lie bleeding, groaning, in a corner; while their comrades fight on the fight, from further participation in which they are debarred.

So fierce is the excitement, and so terrible the exertion, that both sides are beginning to tire, but Hubert Glynne and his party more so, for they, being in the minority, had the greater difficulty in holding their ground.

Hubert glances over his shoulder, hoping to see a reinforcement pour into the room.

But he looks in vain, and wonders at the cause.

This is simple enough. They press on too eagerly, and both ladders give way under the excessive weight.

So he finds himself, with five others, opposed to ten sailors, and Enoch Allen, who is armed with both cutlass and revolver.

After a moment's breathing time, which the Consul employs judiciously in loading his six-shooter, the combat again commences.

Now slowly but surely the Confederates are driven back to the window. Four of their number are wounded, one badly, and the others slightly.

The odds begin to tell, and it now becomes a question whether the little band can even save themselves from death, or at least being made prisoners.

"At them, boys!" shouts Enoch Allen, seeing how the six flagged from sheer weariness. "Down with the rebel pirates!"

As he speaks, he fires his reloaded pistol, and another of his opponents falls shot through the thigh.

There remain but five wounded men now against eleven.

Hubert Glynne looks despairingly behind him for more aid.

The Yankees press on, each of Hubert's party having now to contend with two.

There can be but one result to so unequal a contest.

"Why do not those without give the aid so badly wanted?"

That is the thought which arises in the mind of each.

"Stand back there, all of you! Back! Back, for your lives!"

Amidst the din which has been going on in the room on the first floor, it has hitherto been impossible to hear anything of what was passing below beyond a confused noise of shouting and firing.

Now, however, in a temporary lull, the words of Stanton Glynne are plainly heard by both parties.

The next moment there comes a blinding flash—a shock which throws every man off his feet—then a great roar and a volume of smoke. The crashing of wood-work, and the moans and cries of wounded men are also heard.

At first neither party can make out what has occurred.

The room is full of smoke; a great rent has been torn in the floor, and through it the lurid gleam of flame is seen.

A portion of the wooden building is on fire; that is obvious enough; and a moment's reflection might have told that a bag of gunpowder had been affixed to the door, and exploded by means of a fusee.

The consequence has been disastrous to the defenders. The whole door is blown bodily in; the furniture and timber piled against it thrown with terrible violence back amongst those who made it their rampart.

Two are killed outright, and all on the ground-floor more or less crushed or otherwise wounded.

After a few moments, during which either side, as though by consent, suspend the fight, the voice of Stanton Glynne is again heard cheering on his men. There is a rush over the burning fragments, and through the blackened and demolished door-way.

Up the stairs they pour, and Enoch Allen and those with him find themselves taken in the rear by a superior force.

A panic seizes them, thus attacked on two sides; for Hubert Glynne, recovering from the shock of the explosion, again encourages his men to fight on.

But there is no fight left in the enemy now. They are outnumbered and thoroughly cowed.

In two minutes from the time of the explosion, at least eighty Confederates are in the house, shouting and yelling like fiends from excitement, and what has been aptly called the "battle fury."

The Yankees throw down their arms and cry for quarter. It is granted, except in a few instances, where swords are actually crossed.

In such cases it is well known that life is seldom spared on either side. The combatant, half-maddened by excitement, cannot or will not, at a moment's warning, restrain his revengeful arm.

But though the fighting was now all over, a terrible scene of riot and destruction ensued.

Like a set of demons let loose, the rioters set to work, smashing and destroying everything the house contained. Pictures, mirrors, curtains, tables, cabinets, all the costly furniture, were soon in process of demolition. It was a terrible sight.

They had fought and won, and now actually seemed to have forgotten the object for which they had perilled their lives.

Very few of them gave a thought to their captured lieutenant.

Even Darby Kelly, who considered himself the special bodyguard of the Englishman, was carried away by the universal madness.

"Hurrah! boys! begars—a chiney cupboard!"

He had pulled open a great cabinet reaching to the ceiling. It was crammed full of china and plate, some of it very valuable—all expensive. Then with a long crowbar he went to work. Never was there heard such a smashing and crashing of crockery. A bull in a china-shop could not compare to it.

Meanwhile Stanton Glynn and a few others ran up the stairs to search for the prisoner. Hubert was busy binding up a wound on his forearm.

The house was on fire in two places, under the stairs and close to the front door where the explosion had taken place.

But none heeded it. Indeed, some of the more reckless threw articles of furniture in the flames in order to feed

them, forgetting that the man they came to release was somewhere confined in the house.

The flames grew fiercer, the smoke denser, and soon it was apparent that the house was doomed—more especially as no hand was raised to save it.

Enoch Allen made no attempt to escape. He stood with folded arms—stern, pale, gloomily surveying in silence the destruction of his “household gods.”

Bitter indeed were his thoughts. The valuables his house contained and the money he had spent on it would amount to more than all else he possessed in the world.

And he was forced to stand by and see it all devoted to ruin.

His pictures, on which he so prided himself, torn down, and, with shouts of joy, thrown to the flames. His china cabinet, the accumulation of more than half a century by himself and father before him, ruthlessly demolished by an infuriated Irishman. His costly furniture smashed up and thrown into the rapidly increasing flames.

In the bitterness of his heart he cursed them all, and prayed they might taste eternal perdition.

Louder and louder grew the roar of the flames—fiercer the glare.

Stanton Glynne and those who had gone to search with him came down in haste, and saw, with pale faces and horror expressed in their countenances, that the house would soon be all one vast blaze, and, as a consequence, if not quickly found and released, *their friends would be roasted alive*. Vainly they collected around them a few friends, and men whom victory had not made drunk. The flames had got the upper-hand, and it was hopeless to attempt extinguishing them.

The staircase was on fire.

All at once there appeared above the flames the figure of a woman—a young and beautiful girl.

“*The keys! the keys! Captain Glynne. For the love of Heaven, the keys!*” she cried.

“What keys?” he shouted, in reply. “Save yourself; come down quickly, or you are lost.”

"No, no, not without him ; not without him. The keys of the room where the prisoner is confined."

She could not see Enoch Allen from where she was, but he saw her and heard her words. At the mention of the keys he started, and a vindictive gleam lighted up his eyes.

He moved slowly towards the doorway, from whence the woodwork and iron bars had been torn by the force of the explosion, leaving a wide gap. She saw him as he approached this.

"Enoch Allen!" she cried, "the keys! Give me the keys, that I may release the prisoner."

But he made no answer, moving all the while slowly towards the doorway.

"Stop him : Captain Glynne, he has the keys in his breast-pocket : the keys which prevent me from liberating your friend."

Her voice was loud and clear—harsh, even—as she almost screamed out these words.

Enoch Allen was now close to the door.

He gave vent to a laugh—a cruel laugh of triumph—as much as to say—

"You burn my house, your friend shall burn with it."

Then he darted through the doorway and was off at full speed.

Juliana Cordova gave utterance to a scream of despair as she saw him disappear.

Instantly Stanton Glynne started in pursuit.

The situation was a terrible one. The staircase below Juliana was now all aflame, and indeed a considerable part of it was utterly destroyed.

She stood there with clasped hands in the full glare of the fire, which approached each instant nearer and nearer, waxed momentarily fiercer and fiercer, compelling her to retreat higher and higher up.

It seemed that her own escape was very doubtful. In a short time more it would be impossible to descend, for not only was the staircase on fire, but the floor all around caught light, so that to leap from the balustrade would be only to alight amidst a sheet of flame.

"Come down ! come down !" cried several. "Jump !

quick. We will catch you. You have not a moment to lose."

But all she replied was in a shrill, screaming voice, full of intense agony—

"The keys! the keys! for the love of Heaven the keys!"

This was the constant refrain of her cry. There she stood, and no persuasion could induce her to come down.

"Oh, the keys! Do get the keys!" she cried, in piteous tones. "For Heaven's sake, the keys! My God, he will be burned alive!"

And there, at the top of the stairs, standing grand and noble in the strength of her love, which would not allow her to desert *him*, though she herself perished, we will for the present leave her.

Surely, there is nothing nobler in all creation than the sight of a true woman, willing, like Juliana, to sacrifice all for her love.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE KEYS.

STANTON GLYNNE bounded after Enoch Allen at his utmost speed. He was a swift runner, young, agile, and could, on a clear course and in daylight, have caught him up in a few seconds. But Enoch Allen, bent on escaping, had cunningly plunged into the thick shrubs.

His pursuer, however, was just able to follow him by sound, as he heard him crashing through the branches. All at once there was a sudden stop in the running of the Consul and a heavy fall. With a cry of triumph Stanton Glynne bounded on yet faster, and in an instant had caught him up.

Enoch Allen had just time to rise, when his pursuer was upon him. He was hurled to earth in a moment. Then there was a short struggle, quickly decided in favour of the young man, who pinned his adversary by the throat, and had him at his mercy.

“Lie still, or I’ll blow your brains out!”

And as earnest of his ability, Stanton Glynne brought his pistol with his other hand, and the Yankee Consul felt the cold iron on his temple.

No matter how brave a man may be, the feel of a pistol barrel—held by an enemy—on the forehead is a conclusive and successful argument for submission.

And Enoch, shuddering as he thought that a very slight pressure on the trigger would send a bullet through his brain, submitted.

He was very near meeting a violent death then. Stanton Glynne was exasperated—almost maddened by what he considered the detestable cruelty of this man’s wishing a helpless prisoner to be burned alive.

He believed he had the keys in his breast-pocket, and

for a moment hesitated whether to kill this man, whom he considered cruel enough to be held as an enemy to the human race.

But he did not. A natural repugnance to kill a man who was utterly at his mercy prevailed over the sterner thought, and for the present Enoch Allen was allowed to live.

"Man, if you move, I will shoot you, so help me God! I am going to search your pockets, so lie still or die, and I will search you afterwards."

Enoch Allen lay still enough while the other searched his pocket. But no keys could he find.

"Where are the keys? Answer truly or die."

"I don't know," was the sullen reply.

At this moment was heard a crash, then the flames blazed brighter, and the roar of the fire was louder.

"Great God! my friend and first-lieutenant is being burned alive, and this wretch has caused it."

He said this *sotto voce*, but Enoch heard and understood.

Then in a loud and terrible voice—

"Man, I will put it in a different way. I believe your last hour has come. I believe you have thrown the keys away and cannot now find them; if such is the case you are a dead man. I swear by all I hold sacred you shall die! I will scatter your brains on the ground. Now, can you find those keys, and that instantly? I give you while I count five to answer, then I pull the trigger."

Enoch Allen knew he would keep his word, and a cold sweat bedewed him at the thought of instant death.

"I will find the keys if I can," he said, in a hoarse voice; "I threw them away close here."

"You die if you do not."

"Take your hand from my throat."

"No, you dog. I will still hold you by the throat, and you shall crawl on your hands and knees to find them."

Stanton Glynn, furious at the thought of the horrible death his lieutenant would probably suffer, thirsted for this man's blood.

Enoch Allen raised himself on his hands and knees, his adversary all the while keeping a firm hold on his throat, almost sufficient to choke him.

The pistol, too, was constantly presented to his head.

He groped about for half a minute without success.

"Now you die," shouted Stanton Glynne, as another crash was heard, and a fresh burst of roaring flame.

But that sudden blaze saved Enoch Allen's life—its flare revealed the keys.

"There! there they are!"

Stanton saw them, released his prisoner, possessed himself of them, and with his utmost speed ran back, leaving the Consul to his own devices.

Certainly the latter had had a narrow escape.

The lower part of the house was now nearly all ablaze.

But still the young commander was able to enter through the doorway. The woodwork had been blown away here by the explosion, so that there was little food for the hungry flames.

The staircase had fallen; that was the first thing he noticed.

The second was the figure of the girl on the landing, as it seemed, at first, all ablaze herself, so powerful was the light of the fire on her figure.

"The keys—the keys! For the love of Heaven, the keys!"

"Here! here!" shouted Stanton Glynne, at the top of his voice. "I have them!"

"I cannot see, for the flames blind me. Oh, God! the keys—Ah!"

"Here," she screamed aloud, as the fire actually caught her dress. She had sufficient presence of mind to put it out with her hands.

"Stand back!" he shouted, "and I will throw them on to the landing."

She obeyed. He threw them, and heard them fall.

With a cry of joy she ran and picked them up.

The next moment she was gone. Gone up to the top in the fond hope of saving the unhappy prisoner.

Gone, perchance, to lose her own life in the noble attempt to save his.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

CAPTAIN GEORGE MAKES A PROMISE.

ALL this while the unlucky first-lieutenant of the *Fieri Cross* lay a prisoner in the strong room at the top.

Treacherously attacked by overwhelming numbers, he yet offered a stubborn resistance, and the result was a cut on the head, and numerous bruises.

Bound hand and foot, he was conveyed on a litter to the Consul's house, carried upstairs, and consigned to his narrow prison—a room, surrounded by shelves and pigeon-holes for the reception of papers, which had been removed for the prisoner, without chair or table, and lighted only by a small hole about a foot square high up in the wall.

Scarcely doubting that Juliana would discover his imprisonment, he confidently hoped that a rescue would be attempted, well knowing that the captain of the vessel was not one to desert a comrade in distress.

When, therefore, he heard the first report of fire-arms, the tell-tale musket which prevented a perfect surprise, he stopped in his pacing to and fro and listened.

In a few seconds he heard enough to convince him that the attempt at his rescue had commenced.

It was with feelings of wild excitement that he heard the uproar of the fray which immediately commenced.

He could distinguish the voices of his friends—Hubert Glynne, Stanton Glynne, and those of others.

He knew by the sharpness of the musketry fire and the fierce shouts of the combatants that there was to be no easy victory.

Wild with excitement, he vainly endeavoured to obtain a view of what was going on through the small window, or rather loophole.

Fiercer and fiercer raged the fight, louder and louder the noise.

Then there came a lull, and he heard the voice of Stanton Glynn shouting to all to stand back.

Immediately afterwards came the flash and roar of the explosion.

At first he thought this was caused by the bursting of a shell, but the dense, white smoke which rose in volumes negated this.

After a pause of a few moments, once more the yells and shouts of the combatants make the night hideous.

Slowly the prisoner becomes aware of an increasing light and hears the crackling and roaring of flames.

Smoke, too—the smoke not of gunpowder, but of burning wood, begins to find its way beneath the crevices of the door.

The house is on fire.

Minute by minute the glare and roar of the flames are greater, and the little room begins to be filled with pungent smoke.

The prisoner soon suffers severely from difficulty of breathing caused thereby, but momentarily expecting to see the door open he endures it uncomplainingly.

But, as time passes, the flames roar louder and the smoke gets hotter, and he can no longer see across his narrow prison, despite the bright blaze of the fire.

“Good Heavens!” he cried, as after a tremendous crash of fallen woodwork the flames leap aloft and the air is lurid with fire.

“Surely, they will not leave me here to be suffocated or burned alive!”

The idea was horrible. But it really seemed as though such must be the case.

The heat grew more intense every moment.

Captain George then got off everything except his shirt and trousers, and set to work and pulled down several of the shelves which were around the sides of the room.

These he piled up under the window, and managed to construct a sort of stool, on which he clambered in the hope of obtaining fresh air.

For a little while his expedient was successful, and he breathed more easily.

"I shall not have to wait long," he said to himself. "Surely they will hasten to release me."

But minutes passed, and still he remained gasping for breath at the little loophole which served for a window.

Hotter and hotter grew the atmosphere, denser and denser the smoke, which, of course, mounted to the upper portion of the house, and there accumulated. Dense volumes, too, now arose outside, and even the little fresh air he could get was soon curtailed.

At last he was compelled to descend from his perch. Human nature could no longer bear the strain.

Then he had recourse to a device well-known to firemen.

He lay down on the floor, close to which it was clearer and cooler, for smoke and hot air always tend to ascend. But it is evident to the prisoner that this last resource will not last long.

The very floor itself becomes so hot as to scorch his hands.

At last—gasping, suffocated, and maddened by pain—he struggled to his feet and dashed himself against the door.

Once!—twice!—thrice!

The roaring of the flames was now so great that it would have been scarcely possible to have heard even the report of a cannon.

Once more he threw himself with despairing energy against the door.

It then opened.

And there, standing like an angel of mercy on the threshold, he beheld Juliana Cordova.

He fell forward prone on his face, from the impetus with which he had dashed himself against the woodwork—too strong by far for his puny effort to effect.

She helped him to rise, and as he staggered to his feet cried—

"Come, come! there is not a moment to be lost! I don't know how we shall escape; the house is all flames!"

Dizzy—half stupefied by the smoke and hot air, he followed her—she leading him by the hand.

"Quick, quick! every second is precious!" she cried.

But it was easier for her to speak than for him to obey.

His faltering steps told how he had suffered during the last quarter of an hour.

At last the door was reached—the outer door of the corridor.

Juliana had the two smaller keys—those of the strong rooms.

The key of the corridor door she had left in the lock—outside.

Imagine her dismay, then, when she pushed against this heavy iron door and found it locked.

It had slammed to. As the lock was a spring one, both were now, as it appeared, hopelessly imprisoned.

“*Jesu Maria!* We are lost!”

This was the wild, despairing cry which escaped from Juliana when she discovered the fatal mistake she had made.

Captain George was now nearly delirious with the combined effect of the smoke, hot air, and excitement.

The very floor began to smoke and steam, and seemed ready to burst into flames.

The heat was intense; the smoke so thick and pungent that it was only possible to breathe by broken gasps.

All at once fire broke out above their heads.

A cry of despair came forth from Juliana as she saw this.

Sparks, borne aloft on the air, had been falling for some time on the roof of the house. It was covered with lead, so did not catch fire. But there was a trap-door of wood opening from the corridor, and on this the flames seized.

Perhaps, had not the first-lieutenant of the *Fiery Cross* been half-stupefied by the heat and smoke, he might have seen a chance of escape. But he did not.

And now little tongues of flame and jets of smoke are seen all about the wooden floor.

In a few minutes more it is quite certain that the whole place will be on fire.

Once—twice—thrice the girl's dress catches alight, and as many times she succeeds in extinguishing it.

They will shortly be in the midst of a sea of flame.

A blazing fragment of wood falls from above, and where it touches the wooden planks, fresh fire breaks forth.

Juliana shrieks in terror as once again her dress is in flames.

The moment afterwards she feels a rush of cold air.

The trap-door opening on the roof has burned through.

She sees a chance of escape.

"Quick, quick!" she cried, seizing the burning fragment of board. "Take it! make haste!"

She pointed to the blazing trap-door above their heads, which was fast being destroyed by the fire.

He understood her, and, with the burning fragment, commenced destroying what still remained of the wood-work.

Meanwhile, Juliana's time was fully occupied in preventing her dress from taking light.

At last the trap-door is entirely demolished.

It seemed an age while it was being done, though in reality it occupied only a few seconds.

The roof was low but still too high for either to reach.

"Climb up, climb up!" she cried.

He said not a word, but summoning all his strength, made a leap, and just caught the edge with his hands; but the hot woodwork crumbled away, and he could get no hold.

Again and again he tried, and each time failed.

Then she tried to lift him, but her strength, wellnigh exhausted, was quite inadequate for the effort.

"No, no!" he cried, as after many unsuccessful attempts, each one weaker than the former, she was again about to essay it; "you cannot lift me, but I can lift you."

At another time this would have occurred to him before. But as it was, he was confused, dizzy, and indeed half-delirious.

When he spoke, however, she gathered the tenor of his words, and instantly proceeded to act upon them.

Though staggering and reeling like a drunken man, he still retained a great portion of his strength, and

nerved by desperation, seized her in his arms and lifted her till her shoulders were above the trap-door.

Aware of the desperate nature of the emergency, she struggled her hardest, and succeeded in gaining the roof.

"Saved, saved!" he cried, in wild excitement; "leap from the roof, Julie. It is not very high. Never mind me."

But it was far from the intention of Juliana to desert her lover in order to save herself.

On the roof was the flagstaff, on which every day the Yankee flag was hoisted.

At the foot of this flagstaff lay a coil of signal-halyards, and with great presence of mind Juliana seized this, and threw it down through the trap-door into the burning gulf below.

Then she made a part fast round the flagstaff, and with her assistance he was safely on the roof in the course of a few moments.

"Saved, saved!" she cried, and fell weeping on his neck.

Not saved yet, however. There was more to be done ere they achieved safety.

Although the house was not lofty, the spot on which they stood was fully thirty-five feet from the ground, and a leap might be fatal.

Now, however, that he once more breathed the fresh air, the Englishman seemed to recover the use of his faculties.

Taking the signal-halyards, he made a bowline round the waist of Juliana, and proceeded to lower her down, first shouting at the top of his voice for those below to look out for and receive her.

She landed safely amidst the cheers of the sailors, who, too late, saw the imminent danger in which their own folly had placed their first-lieutenant.

To make fast one part of the signal-halyards to the flag-staff and slide down himself did not take him long; and scorched, bruised, and bleeding, Captain George soon had the good fortune to be surrounded by friends on *terra firma*.

"Juliana—where is she?" he said. "I don't see her."

She had fainted. The terrible excitement had proved too much for her, now that at last she was safe—not only safe herself, but with the proud consciousness of having saved her lover.

As he leant over her insensible form and sprinkled water on her face, he murmured—

“If ever I prove false to or desert you, Juliana, may Heaven desert me!”

And thus ended the attack on the house of Consul Brock Allen.

CHAPTER XXIX

THE ESCAPE.

"To the boats—to the boats!" cried Stanton Glynne. "Make a litter of boughs for the lady and the wounded."

This was quickly done, and in less than an hour the victors in this expedition were again on board their ships.

Our gallant heroine, Juliana, recovered from her swoon before she had been carried as far as the sea-shore.

It was a question of some embarrassment as to what should be done with her, but her recovery fortunately solved the difficulty.

She herself begged to be taken on board one of the vessels, and after a few minutes' deliberation, it was resolved by the rebel commander that she should embark in the *Fiery Cross*, and be transported to Havannah, where she had friends.

Once on board, a cabin was prepared for her, and every possible attention paid her.

As for Captain George, though bruised and scorched, he declared that he was not seriously hurt, and expressed his ability to return to duty after a night's repose.

All this, which has taken some time to relate, did not occupy more than two hours in the transaction.

Long before midnight both vessels were under way, and fast leaving the port of Cienfuegos behind them.

The watches were set, and after the excitement and fatigue of the early part of the night, the weary crew sought that repose which was so necessary.

The watch below were in their hammocks, the others lying about the deck in every possible position.

There seemed no life on board either vessel: with the exception of the helmsman, quartermaster, sentry, and look-out all hands are buried in sleep.

The morning broke clear and beautiful. A sharp and refreshing shower washed the decks, and then it fell nearly dead calm.

Under these circumstances it was deemed advisable to keep steam up ; and at an easy rate of six or seven knots the two vessels stood out from the land.

By noon, all that could be seen of the Island of Cuba was a faint, grey line on the horizon.

The crews were allowed to rest as much as possible during the heat of the day, only those who had not borne a part in the fatigues, perils, and excitement of the night being kept at work, clearing up the decks, and repairing what damage had been done to the Mohican's hull and rigging.

Juliana, refreshed by repose, and inspirited by the bright sunshine and gentle, balmly breeze, but more so by the consciousness of having saved her lover, came on deck, looking as lovely as ever—not a whit the worse for what she had undergone.

To Captain George the surgeon had surreptitiously administered a powerful composing draught, which caused him to sleep all through the night and the greater part of the day.

When he awoke the sun was approaching the western horizon.

He felt stiff and sore, and his hands were scorched by the fire ; but otherwise he was not in a bad plight. The pistol wound he had received was very trifling in its nature : no bone or large blood-vessel had been injured, the bullet only making a small, clean hole through the flesh, which had already closed over it, and was in a fair way for healing.

So, after this slight wound had been attended to by the doctor, he went on deck and joined Juliana, who, seated near the taffrail, was looking out on the blue sea, just rippled by the pleasant breeze.

After what had passed, there could be no ambiguity in their relations one to the other.

The English lieutenant of the Fiery Cross was irrevocably bound, both by love and honour, to the devoted girl who had saved him at the risk of her own life.

In answer to his questions, she stated her wish that she might be put on shore at Havannah, on the other side of the island.

Captain George left her to speak with the commander of the vessel on the subject; and it was resolved that, spite of the risk, her wish would, if possible, be complied with.

This having been settled, the vessel is headed in the necessary direction. Half an hour before sunset the man on the look-out aloft cried—

“Sail, ho!”

And in answer to the question—

“Where away?”

“Right ahead,” was the reply.

Steam was quickly got up, and the two rebel vessels went ahead full speed in pursuit.

It might be a Yankee merchantman, in which case they would have an easy prize.

Or it might be a Yankee ship-of-war, in which case they might expect a hard fight.

CHAPTER XXX.

SEPARATION.

"ALL hands aft. Officers on the quarter-deck."

It was just about sundown when this order from the young commander caused the crew to assemble abaft the mainmast.

With the sinking of the sun the wind rose, and it blew a fresh gale, under the influence of which, and a full head of steam, the two vessels dashed through the water at the rate of full fifteen knots.

The chase was being rapidly overhauled. First her top-gallant sails, then her top-sails and lower yards coming in sight.

By the squareness of these it was evident that she was a large ship—almost certainly a heavily-armed sailing frigate.

The question was of what nation?

The prevailing opinion was that it was a Yankee man-of-war: in which case there would be a fight, and the two vessels would either sink or capture her, or themselves suffer destruction.

But there was a unanimous wish with all hands that it might prove to be an enemy's vessel. As to the result, elated by victory, scarce one on board had any doubt of that.

She might be larger and heavier armed; but they were two, and had the advantage of steam, which apparently the other did not possess—at least, there was at present no symptoms of it, the stranger tearing ahead with the rapidly-increasing breeze, every stitch of canvas spread, even top-gallant topsails.

The evening set in clear and fine. There was a young moon, and ere it was dark it seemed that the chase would be "hull up," and they would be able to decide as to her

character—whether she was a large merchantman or a man-of-war.

The men having been mustered aft, and his officers assembled around him, Commander Stanton Glynne proceeded to address them.

A midshipman and a petty officer stood by the signal-halyards, and conveyed the orders of the captain by means of the flags to the Mohican.

In obedience to these she bore up and ranged herself as close alongside the Fiery Cross as safety would permit.

Both vessels were tearing through the water in full pursuit of the strange sail, and within easy hailing distance of each other.

Stanton Glynne consulted with several of his officers and his brother.

On this occasion, however, he did not call the first-lieutenant into his councils.

Some thought this strange, but others judged rightly that he was about to say that which concerned the Englishman personally.

“Sailors, marines, and officers—my brave men all—you have behaved splendidly. Within the last forty-eight hours we have captured one Yankee vessel, and caused the destruction of another. We have, moreover, triumphantly passed out from a port where the insolent enemy attempted to blockade us. Moreover, we have rescued a comrade, treacherously and illegally made prisoner by the United States Consul, and have signally avenged the outrage. We have now two vessels in place of one, and sufficient men to man both, though not so strongly as I could wish. I shall myself retain the command of this vessel, and if fortune favour us, will prove a sharp thorn to the Yankees.

“As to the steamer we have captured, late the Mohican, I shall re-christen her, appoint officers, and apportion a sufficient crew. There are two questions which I have been debating in my mind, and on both of which I have come to a decision. The first was—what shall we name our prize? The second, whom shall I appoint as commander? I trust my decision will meet the approval of all of you. I doubt not that many on board this ship have heard of

the daring exploits of a gallant young hero, now, alas! dead. His name was David Leigh, and the ship he commanded named the Black Angel. In the most audacious manner he captured her and ran her out of New York harbour in the face of the Yankee fleet, while yet she was a United States vessel, and called the Spitfire. He fought and defeated the vessels sent in pursuit, and finally ran her into Charlestown harbour, pursued by the whole blockading fleet. There are some on board this ship who took part in that glorious cruise. Notably one of the crew of the Fiery Cross, now an officer among us, without whose skill and daring we should never have escaped, and in escaping inflicted such terrible injury on the enemy. I allude to our first-lieutenant, whom we know as Captain George. To him I propose to intrust the command of our capture. In memory of his friend Davey Leigh, with whom he fought and conquered, I will re-name the ship the Black Angel. Under that title she shall go forth carrying havoc and destruction to the enemy's commerce, and filling the pockets of our brave crew with Yankee dollars. Now, lads, if you're all of my mind, give three cheers for the Black Angel and for her new captain."

The applause which greeted this speech bore witness to the willingness of the men to accept the Englishman as captain. There was something practically just in giving the old friend and comrade of Davey Leigh the command of a vessel named after the sloop Black Angel.

Captain George willingly accepted the proffered command, and while expressing his thanks for the honour done him, declared that he would not disgrace the memory of Davey Leigh; but that the new Black Angel should emulate, and if possible excel, the exploits of the other.

All hands were now dismissed and ordered to be in readiness to come to the guns, for the strange vessel a-head was being rapidly overhauled. Although she carried a heavy press of canvas, and there was a stiff breeze, it was not possible for a vessel under sail alone to compete with sail and steam combined.

In the chase the little Fiery Cross rapidly distanced

her consort, for the latter could not put on full steam by reason of a slight accident to her machinery.

Hand over hand the rebel privateer came up with the chase. When about a mile distant a gun was fired.

The stranger answered by another from her starboard bow port.

A man-of-war evidently from her manner of replying, even had the fact not been sufficiently apparent from her rig and heavy spars.

An enemy, perhaps; and wild with excitement at the thought of a fight, though with a formidable foe, the crew of the Fiery Cross rush unbidden to their posts.

Away flies the little vessel at top speed under sail and steam, and in the course of half-an-hour ranges up alongside of a fine frigate, with sixteen black muzzles grinning through her ports on either side.

"This is the Confederate States steamer, Fiery Cross. What ship is that?"

There was to be no fight. The chase replied, laconically—

"Her Britannic Majesty's ship, *Arethusa*."

And without pausing in her course on dashed the noble frigate under the tremendous press of canvas, beneath which her spars were bending like whips, and was soon out of sight.

The Fiery Cross now slackened speed, and letting the fires go down, the business of choosing a crew and appointing officers to the newly-named Black Angel was proceeded with.

She was the larger ship of the two, and Captain Glynne generously gave her more than half his complement of men. With those who had volunteered from the enemy there were now, all told, one hundred and fifty men and officers fit for duty. Eighty were allotted to the Black Angel, the young commander of the Fiery Cross contenting himself with seventy only.

Hubert Glynne elected to serve with Captain George on board the Black Angel; his reason for so doing was a good one.

"You see, Stanton, if you were to be killed, and I was on board, it would unnerve me and render me miserable

and despondent ; while, if I were to fall, it would have the same effect on you."

Juliana Cordova also desired to transfer herself to the other vessel, Captain George promising to land her at or rather near the Havannah, for it was not considered safe to enter that port after all that had happened.

The greater part of the day and a part of the night were occupied in transferring the crew, arms, baggage, &c., and in equally distributing stores and water according to the number of men each vessel had. All the wounded were put on board the Black Angel, as being larger and having better accommodation for them.

This having been done, Captain George took command of his own ship, and the two stood on under sail for the northern shore of the island, in order that the lady might be put ashore according to her desire.

About fifteen miles westward from the port of Havannah there is a little creek or bay with sandy shore, easily accessible to boats, and into this the two vessels were steered.

Juliana was handed into a boat, and with Captain George and Hubert Glynne accompanying, in a quarter of an hour she stood once more on Spanish soil.

Hubert Glynne remained in charge of the boat, while Captain George walked up from the beach with the young lady, intending to conduct her to a place of safety, whence she could be forwarded on to Havannah, where she had friends.

They had not far to go, for on arriving at the summit of a hillock, about two hundred yards from the shore, they saw before them a large house, from the windows of which lights gleamed. It was the country mansion of a Spanish gentleman, and knowing that Juliana would there receive shelter and the means of being forwarded to Havannah, they walked fearlessly up to it.

The door was open, and they entered a large hall with a number of negroes. There were several Spanish soldiers, too, in a sort of guard-room adjoining ; so by this they knew it was the abode of some officer of distinction. Juliana explained in Spanish what she required, and asked who was the owner of the house. Both she

and her companion were much surprised when they learned it was the abode of the Governor-General of Cuba.

In a short time the Confederate officer and the lady were ushered into the presence of his Excellency, a tall, grave, handsome man, apparently between forty and fifty years of age.

He listened to what Juliana had to say, and then with courtly politeness said that his house was entirely at her disposal, and he should be most happy to forward her to her destination in the morning.

He offered the like hospitality to Captain George, who declined, however, stating that he must soon join his ship, which lay in the bay.

However, he did not refuse to partake of some refreshment, more especially as Juliana urgently pressed him so to do.

She looked pleadingly at him, her dark eyes suffused with tears.

After partaking of supper, in which their host joined them, he rose to take his leave.

"I have seen you before, sir," his Excellency said, "and that quite lately. I am trying to remember when and where."

Juliana then called to his recollection the ball at the house of Don Imaga.

Then Captain George took his leave. Juliana volunteered to accompany him. Sooth to say, she wished to take farewell of him in private—a long, perhaps a last, farewell.

They stood together on a sandy mound overlooking the bay, and the sea beyond.

They could see the two vessels lying quietly at anchor, and the boat moored on the shore awaiting the commander of the *Black Angel*.

"When may I expect to see you again?" she asked, plaintively. "Perhaps never!"

"Do not say that, Juliana. Fortune has favoured us hitherto; let us hope for the best."

"You are going on a dangerous expedition. You cannot always expect to escape. There will be scores of

cruisers sent out in search of you; you cannot expect to evade them all."

"We will evade the heavy and slow ones; as to the fast and light ones—well, we shall stop and fight—ay, and conquer too."

"But you have not told me when you will see me again."

"Juliana, you must know that it is all but impossible for the commander of a vessel in active service to name any certain time. All depends upon the duty I may be ordered on—on the fortune of war, the duration of this struggle, and many other things."

"But you will give me some idea? Will you be back in six months?"

"I fear not."

"A year?"

"I cannot say."

"Two years?"

"Yes; I think I may promise in two years, at the longest. This struggle cannot surely last so long; it will certainly be decided one way or the other by that time."

"And you promise that in two years at the latest you will return to this island to claim me, Juliana, who loves you better than the whole world beside?"

"Where shall be our rendezvous, Julie?"

"In Havannah. I will leave a letter for you at the British Consulate. And I will often inquire there in hopes of hearing from you. You will write, will you not?"

"Yes, I will write. If you do not hear from me or see me in two years, you may conclude, Juliana, that a Yankee bullet or cannon-shot has done its work."

"Oh, do not talk so, dearest," cried Juliana, clinging to him and weeping on his shoulder; "you have not been saved from the raging flames in so wonderful a manner only to die in battle. No, you will come back."

"Juliana, my darling," he said, kissing her, "I must now bid you adieu—a long adieu."

"So soon? Alas! I dread to part with you."

For a little while longer he stayed—she murmuring soft words of love in his ears, and pleading, vainly plead-

ing, that he would give up this wild and reckless life for her sake.

"It is useless, Juliana. After this war is over, if I come safely through, I will, if you wish, promise you to settle down to a quiet life ever after. Now the call of honour bids me go on. My comrades await me. Hark ! there is a gun as a signal for the return of the boat. We have been too long already, I fear. Farewell, dearest."

He strained her to him in one last embrace, and then bounded away down the slope.

It was a clear, calm night, and by the light of the stars and the young moon, she watched him as he made his way down to the shore.

She saw the boat put off—come alongside the ship.

Then she saw both vessels get under way and sail quietly and majestically down the little bay.

"Alas ! I fear I shall never, never see him again. He is gone ; gone, perhaps, for ever. At all events, I have the sweet consciousness of knowing that in return for the service he rendered me years ago, I have saved his life. Madman that he is ; why will he risk throwing it away in a quarrel which is none of his nor his nation's ? "

Juliana might well ask why, the answer would be that her lover chose to imperil life and limb from sincere motives.

One reason was his deep sympathy with the cause of the so-called rebels. Another, that he had many friends in the Confederate ranks. Last, and perhaps not the least reason was, that insatiable love of adventure and craving for excitement which has characterized so many brave spirits in times past, the spirit which animated Frobisher and Columbus, Raleigh, and that splendid adventurer, Francis Drake.

Assuredly but for these adventurers, though, withal, somewhat lawless spirits, England would not now be what it is.

Juliana stood and watched the two vessels steal quietly out in the moonlit bay.

Then, with a sigh, she turned and made her way back to the hospitable house of the governor.

CHAPTER XXXI.

A GOLD HARVEST.

DURING the passage from the shore to the vessel, Captain George said little or nothing to his friend Hubert Glynne. The memory of his recent parting with Juliana weighed heavily on his spirits, and he could not help a feeling of self-reproach. It seemed so like desertion of her, and that so soon after she had saved his life at imminent peril of her own.

Vainly he tried to console himself by saying that he could not do otherwise, that duty must be paramount to everything.

He could justify his reason, but not his heart.

On gaining the deck of the *Black Angel*, the other vessel immediately signalled to make an offing.

Having given the necessary order, the commander and the captain of marines—Hubert Glynne—paced the quarter-deck together.

"You were a devil of a time gone with the young lady, George, my boy," the latter said. "I hope you saw her into safe quarters?"

"I did, indeed. You would scarcely guess in whose house she is."

"I am sure I shall not try," replied Hubert.

"You remember that tall, dark man, who so attracted your attention at the ball given by Don Imaga?"

"What! the Governor-General of Cuba?"

"No other. There, yonder is his house. I can see the lights in the windows. It is but eight miles by a straight road from the capital, and he tells me the town can easily be seen from the roof."

Hubert Glynne was suddenly silent and grave.

"This is very strange," he said, presently. "Do you know, old boy, even the memory of that man's face causes me a singular feeling, as though I had known him

before. More than this, as I strolled about the shore waiting for you to return, I experienced a sort of pre-sentiment as though the place where we landed was somehow connected with my future fate. For the life of me I could not drive it off, nor yet the memory of the Governor-General's face."

"Oh! only a fancy."

"He is enormously rich, they say."

"A Governor-General of Cuba cannot help becoming rich. He is almost bound to make a large fortune in ten years."

"Well, let's change the subject and talk of our cruise. What do you propose as the plan of operations?"

"I have decided on nothing as yet. I shall wait and have a consultation with your brother first. Remember, we have not yet agreed on a rendezvous or made any arrangements as to the disposal of prize-money, &c. The Fiery Cross is signalling. What do you make them out?"

Hubert Glynne, referring to the code, read, by the binnacle lamp: "Stand on under easy sail until off Havannah, and keep a good look-out."

"My brother has always an eye to business," Hubert said. "He thinks that we may as well pick up a prize or two in company before we start on our regular cruises."

"He is right. We are in a very likely place. A Yankee merchantman, arriving off the port at night, would probably heave-to till morning for a pilot. I shall turn in for an hour or two. Lieutenant of the watch!"

"Sir."

"Call me if anything happens. Keep in sight of our consort, and have a good look-out."

"Ay, ay, sir."

At six bells in the middle-watch the cry came from the mast-head—

"A light on the lee bow!"

There was a breeze blowing off the land, and the moment the captain came on deck and ascertained that it was a ship's light, he gave orders to make all sail, and

started to reconnoitre, first signalling to the Fiery Cross. In an hour's time the hull and spars of a large vessel were made out. She was under three topsails only, the mizen laid aback.

The Black Angel ranged up alongside.

"What ship is that?" asked Captain George.

"The Nora; from Boston to Havannah. We're lying-to till daylight. What ship's that?"

"The United States sloop of war, Mohican. Come on board with your papers."

"Ay, ay," grunted the Yankee captain, not very well pleased, but not daring to refuse.

Arrived on board, he was shown into the cabin, when he at once unlocked a tin box and commenced to exhibit his papers.

"Hope they're all in good order, sir," said our friend.

"All perfectly correct, captain."

"What's your cargo?"

"General."

"Valuable?"

"Very."

"Got any specie aboard?"

"Yes. Our owner's going to speculate in a cargo of sugar this trip. We're going to transfer the ship to the Spanish flag, though, before we start again. I tell you, I have heard so much of them cursed rebel pirates that I kinder feel glad we're got to our journey's end and this trip."

"How much specie have you?"

"Forty thousand dollars, in gold."

"Where is it stowed?"

"Wall, now, cap'in," said the Yankee skipper, shifting uneasily in his chair, "I reckon you're too inquisitive. It's safe enough, never fear."

"Come, come; you know you may as well tell me," said Captain George, good humouredly. "I reckon if I'd got instructions from my government to do so I could soon find it."

This was so obviously true, that the Yankee let out the secret, thoroughly believing, however, that he was on board a Yankee vessel of war.

"It's where it could never be found," he said; "no, not even if we were overhauled by all the rebel pirates afloat."

"Ah, you've been cunning, sir."

"I've been cautious, cap'n; cautious. I come o' a Scotch stock, and caution's bred in me."

"Well, where is this gold?"

"You must know that my ship is chock full up to the hatches with cargo."

"Well, where's this gold—at the bottom of the cargo?"

"No, sirree; at the top of the cargo. I had two or three planks sawn through and taken up in my cabin, right aft, and there, in a snug berth, close under the deck where my bunk is, the boxes of yellow coin lie."

"Thank you," said Captain George, politely. "Lieutenant of the watch!"

"Sir!" cried the officer, down the skylight.

"Take two armed boats, and go on board the *Nora*. Beneath some planks, which have been taken up and laid down again, in the captain's cabin, you will find some boxes of specie. Bring them on board, and I will give further orders."

The Yankee skipper leapt to his feet.

"Thunder and snakes, cap'n! what's all this? What do yer want with my owner's gold?"

"Don't excite yourself, sir! Duty is duty. Now, suppose Uncle Sam wants your owner's gold, I suppose he's a right to it?"

"I don't know so much about that. It seems to me that we have to pay pretty stiff for this war as it is," replied the master of the *Nora*, sulkily.

"Well, now, what crew have you?"

"Thirty-six, all told."

"Many Yankees among them?"

"No; scarce any. English, Irish, and Scotch, principally, with some Germans."

Captain George had in view the recruitment of the scanty crews of the two vessels by volunteers.

"Take any refreshment, sir?"

"Don't mind if I do."

Spirits and glasses were placed on the table, and the

skipper of the good ship *Nora*, from Boston for Havannah, which he was destined not to see this trip, filled his glass.

All this while he had not the remotest idea of the truth.

Captain George was not in uniform ; on rising from his bunk he put on a loose overcoat. He wore his sword, but that was the only symbol of naval rank. The vessel, too, had every appearance of being what she assumed. In several places in the cabin, the Yankee flag, the stars and stripes, had been painted by way of ornament, and had not yet been removed, and there were many other little circumstances which helped to deceive the unfortunate New Englander.

By the time the latter had finished his grog, the boat had returned in charge of the first-lieutenant, bringing the boxes of gold.

These were carried into the cabin, and carefully deposited on the table.

"Well, I'm hanged!" the Yankee broke out. "If this ain't a queer rig. What, on airth, do this mean, cap'n? Seems to me if it's a joke, it's agoing a little too far."

"Don't excite yourself, sir. Mr. Scott"—to the first-lieutenant—"you will take another armed boat with a prize crew on board the *Nora* ; send her men on board here, and take possession of her."

"H—and fury! Take possession of my ship! What, on airth, do this mean, cap'n? I won't stand it. I'll complain to our Consul to-morrow. Sure as death I will."

"Take possession of her," Captain George went on, quietly, "in the name of the Confederate States of America."

"What!"

The Yankee skipper's face was a perfect picture—horror, dismay, anger, all combined.

"Ah! you're joking. This is the United States sloop *Mohican*, ain't it?"

"Well, sir, she was the *Mohican*."

"Was! how d'ye mean was?—ain't she now?"

"No: she was captured by the Confederate States ship *Fiery Cross*, and she's now the Confederate ship *Black Angel*, and your vessel is her prize."

Terrible was the despair of the master of the *Nora*. He wept, and actually tore his hair with grief.

"Oh, Lord ! oh, Lord ! I'm a ruined man. Have pity, Mister Rebel, do, and let me go. I've been at sea thirty-five years, and I've put all my savings in the vessel this trip. Oh ! do let me go this once. I'll take care she shall never come in your way again. Keep the gold, that's all the owner's ; but let the ship go, she's part mine."

Captain George smiled, and replied, quietly—

"Impossible, sir. I should be committing a gross breach of duty in doing so. The ship is a lawful prize, and must be destroyed."

"Oh, my poor wife and children ! They'll be expecting me home in a couple of months. This was to be my last voyage. We've looked out, and they're looking forward to my return to settle down and live happily all together. But if you take my ship I'm a beggar, my poor wife and children are penniless in the wide world. I never can face them. They begged and prayed of me not to go, but I would have one more venture ; and now I'm a ruined man."

He was a gray-headed man of nearly sixty years, and the rebel commander pitied him from his heart. But Mr. Scott, the first-lieutenant, spoke up—

"You say you are ruined, and your wife and family penniless. So am I. Six months ago I was worth a hundred thousand dollars, and had an estate in Virginia. Your hireling Yankee hordes came and ravaged it—burned down the buildings—drove off the cattle. Now I have nothing but my sword.

Hubert Glynne spoke next.

"I and others, Mister Yankee, were rich men awhile back ; but you cursed Yankees came, invaded our State, drove the slaves off my plantation, burned my cotton, sugar machinery, and even the old house my father and grandfather were born in. There are hundreds who have been so treated. We care not what your Yankee soldiers do in fair fight, because I know we can whip them ; and because they know it, they shun us on the battle-field unless they are ten to one with artillery behind them, and make war on defenceless women and old men. Then let

us hear no more of mercy from Yankee lips. Such mercy as they give shall be meted to them."

"Lieutenant Scott," said the rebel captain, "go on board the prize, take her chronometers and other valuables, also any stores we may require, then get the men on board and set fire to her."

"Ay, ay, sir."

The Yankee skipper knew that further remonstrance was useless, so he laid his head on the table and wept in silent misery.

"Cheer up, sir. It is the fortune of war," Captain George replied.

"May Heaven forgive you, young man, for this night's work! I can't. You will set fire to my ship and in half an hour destroy the savings of thirty years' hard service."

"It is useless to discuss the point. The Yankees wage a vindictive war of invasion, and when you yourselves suffer you think it unjust."

In half an hour the good ship *Nora*, 900 tons burden, and worth, with her cargo, 150,000 dollars at least, was all in flames; and shortly after her crew, except ten who volunteered, were put into their own boats, and with sad hearts rowed away from their burning vessel for the port of Havannah, distant some ten miles.

This was Captain George's first capture since taking the command. If not a very brilliant affair, it was, at all events, a very profitable one, the share of each sailor on board being over 300 dollars in gold.

The two rebel vessels lay by the burning ship till daylight on the chance of some other Yankee being attracted by the glare, and then made sail and bore away.

Shortly after eight bells in the forenoon watch, Stanton Glynne signalled for the captain of the *Black Angel* to come on board.

The two commanders went down into the cabin and commenced arranging their future plans.

"I propose that we now part company," said Stanton Glynne. "I think I shall have a cruise over to Europe, and catch some of the Yankees passing up or coming from the Mediterranean through the Straits of Gib-

raltar. What do you propose? Exercise your own judgment."

"I think I shall cruise in the track of homeward-bound Indiamen, making my way gradually south. Then, when I am short of water and coal, I can put into some South American port, Rio de Janiero, for instance, and start again, always working along the track of ships from the East Indies and China. They are all large vessels, with valuable cargoes."

"Then we may rendezvous at the Cape of Good Hope?"

"That will do admirably. And the time?"

"In six months from this, say, we will meet in Table Bay, compare notes, and see which has done most damage to the enemy, and made most prize-money."

"Agreed," said Captain George. "Now what about this specie we took from the Yankee. You had better take your share, as you were in company."

"No; you overhauled the first prize and captured her without our assistance, so the whole amount is justly yours. At least, you must take five out of the ten volunteers. Short-handed as you are, even five will make a difference."

"Yes, I am agreeable to that; send them on board, and then we'll be off on our respective cruises. Give my love and farewell to old Hubert."

"I will."

Stanton Glynne accompanied his late first-lieutenant to the gangway, where he bade him adieu.

"Good-bye, old fellow, for six months at any rate. Good luck go with you! Stay; we'll have a parting glass. Steward! spirits and glasses."

Then, standing in the waist, they drank a farewell cup.

"Here's success to the Black Angel and confusion to the Yankees," said Stanton Glynne.

"Here's success to the Fiery Cross and confusion to the Yankees," said Captain George, as he drained off his glass.

Then they shook hands, the latter jumped into the boat, and was rowed on board his own ship.

The two white ensigns with the starry blue cross were

dipped as a parting salute, a gun was fired from either, and then they went each on her cruise.

To chronicle simultaneously the cruises of two vessels setting out from the same place and at the same time is a manifest impossibility. To chronicle separately the exploits, dangers, success, and failures of each would be, if not an impossibility, impracticable within reasonable limits. For this reason it is better not to relate circumstantially the career of either of these our two rovers of the sea.

We will, however, so far honour the *Black Angel* by following her for the first few days, in order to see if she bears herself as nobly as her destroyed namesake, commanded by the man dead, Davey Leigh, whose deeds had become traditions in the Confederate service.

The *Black Angel*, however, was steered to the north, while the other vessel bore away to the eastward. Late in the afternoon a sail was espied by the look-out right ahead. In an hour's time her hull could be made out, so rapidly did the two vessels sailing in opposite directions approach each other. That it was likely to be a prize was soon apparent. When within about three miles the stranger suddenly hauled his wind, as though stunned, and attempted to make off to the eastward; but he was too late, and after an hour's sharp chase, the Yankee brig *Kingfisher* was brought to by a shot across her bows. The first-lieutenant was sent on board to examine the papers, and these proving that she was undoubtedly an enemy, and did not carry a neutral cargo, her crew and valuables were got on board, and the barrel placed in the hold and set fire to.

In half an hour she was in full blaze—another sacrifice to the grim god of war.

Two of her crew of eight volunteered, and from one of these some important information was obtained, which was moreover verified by the newspapers found on board. It was to the effect that a grand expedition had sailed from the north for Galveston, in Texas. There were at least twelve thousand troops under General Banks, and the object was to land them so as to get a footing in Texas.

The expedition would of course be accompanied by one or more armed vessels. This would give a chance for a fight, in which, should the *Black Angel* prove victorious, the whole convoy of transports crowded with troops would be entirely at the mercy of the rebel privateer.

A glorious thought, and one which filled the heart of the captain with enthusiasm, in which the officers joined when it was made known to them! It was a daring adventure truly to steer with a single vessel, not much more than half-manned, in search of a squadron of the enemy's war ships, not improbably four or five times stronger than herself; and this, too, on a coast closely blockaded from north to south by, one might really say, hundreds of armed vessels.

But though daring in the extreme, the captain thought there was an excellent chance of success. He relied upon the fighting qualities of his crew, already abundantly proved, and also on the large one-hundred-pounder rifled gun and the heavy ten-inch shell gun.

So after deliberating with his officers, it was resolved that the attempt should be made.

First, however, he thought it advisable to give his crew a week's drill and practice with the big guns. So under easy sail the *Black Angel* stood to the north-west across the Gulf of Mexico. The captain calculated that at the present rate of sailing Galveston would be reached in about nine days. Meanwhile the men were thoroughly exercised, and at the end of four days were certainly capable of firing three shots, when before they would hardly have made two, in a given time.

On the fifth a barque was overhauled. Another prize. She proved to be the *Northern Star*, of Boston. Her crew, numbering eighteen in all, were transferred on board, and then hauling off to a distance of about a mile, the crew were beat to quarters—guns loaded with shot and shell, and the unfortunate Yankee made a target off. The practice was excellent: in a quarter of an hour she was hulled at least twenty times. Great rents were torn in her sides. The explosion of shells set her on fire in several places, till at last a shot from "*Stonewall Jackson*," as the big hundred-pounder was called, settled the

business by knocking a great hole in her below the water-line.

In less than half an hour from the time the firing commenced she went down. This was very good practice considering the distance, and gave the captain increased confidence in his crew.

In two days more it was calculated by the officers that they were within fifty miles of Galveston.

The men were now in splendid trim and eager for a fight; their previous successes had wonderfully inspired all hands, and the belief that the Black Angel was invincible was general on board.

Of the prisoners taken from the barque—eighteen in all—four volunteered. This brought up the numbers on board the rebel vessel to ninety-two in all, including officers.

It will be as well here first to notice how the crew were divided.

Commander, Captain George; lieutenants, Scott, Hennessey, and Rowel; Hubert Glynne, captain of marines; John Edwards, master; and two midshipmen—nine officers in all. Next, there were twenty volunteers, rated on the books as supernumerary midshipmen. These were a part of those who joined Hubert Glynne on Lake Portchartrain, and were first-rate gunners, having devoted themselves to it with heart and soul. In action, or when at drill, they would take their places, stripped to the trousers, like the seamen; but at other times they used the quarter-deck, and messed with the officers. Then there was the steward and his assistant, the cook and his mate, ten marines, six engineers and firemen, and fifty-six seamen, making a total of ninety-two, all told.

This was a very short complement certainly, but still, every one doing his duty, it was possible to work the guns as effectually as though there were double the number. The deficiency, however, would be seriously felt in case it was necessary to board or resist boarding.

As things were at present, this could, of course, be avoided, unless in case of a vessel of inferior force, or even worse manned.

Keeping steadily on her course by daylight, and slowly under very small sail by night, the next day, at noon, it was ascertained the ship was not more than twenty-five miles from Galveston Bay.

A bright look-out was kept from the mast-head, and shortly before two o'clock in the afternoon the man stationed there reported several vessels right ahead.

It was arranged that the *Black Angel* should approach near enough to make out how many vessels there were, so as to ascertain whether it was indeed the expedition or not, and then retire to a greater distance, so as to keep clear of observation, if possible, until night. Then it was intended to steam boldly for the squadron, attack and endeavour to cripple the war vessels, and sink all the transports.

A daring scheme certainly, and deserving of success from its very boldness.

As it happened, however, the look-out man paid too much attention to the group of vessels ahead, keeping his eye constantly fixed on them, to the neglect of the rest of the horizon.

A wretched little one-gun paddle steamer cruising down the coast espied the *Black Angel* before she herself was observed.

This destroyed all chance of a surprise.

Away sped the steamer towards the squadron lying outside the bar to carry the news of a strange sail, firing a gun to attract attention. It was obvious that further attempt at concealment was hopeless, so the *Black Angel* stood slowly in under sail only. At five o'clock in the afternoon she was within four miles of the bar, and all the vessels there assembled could plainly be made out. There were three men-of-war, and at least twenty smaller vessels—the transports carrying the troops. One was a large steam-ship, at least three times the size of the *Black Angel*; another a screw steamer, apparently carrying a heavy broadside, and the third a vessel about the size of the rebel.

The latter two started in pursuit when the Confederate cruiser was within four miles.

The helm was put up, and the *Black Angel* headed

away from the squadron, as though desirous of escaping.

The order was given to get the steam up, and make ready to lower the propeller, which had been hoisted for more than a week.

The captain of our privateer, however, was by no means desirous of escaping. His object was to draw one of the vessels on, away from the others. Great was the joy on board the *Black Angel* when it was observed that the small vessel was much faster than the other, and left her far behind. The latter soon gave up the chase, and returned to her post with the squadron.

At dusk the pursuing vessel was still three miles distant, and fearful she might be missed in the darkness, all sail was taken in but the topsails, so as to allow the other to gain on her.

This manœuvre seemed to excite some suspicion in the Yankee, for he seemed in no hurry to come up—shortening sail also, and shutting off steam. However, the rebels were determined not to be baulked, and by tossing a large spar overboard the vessel was made to go slower still; and just as darkness gave place to the light, Captain George gave the order to clew up and furl the topsails and lower the propeller. As soon as this was done, the *Black Angel* suddenly turned on her pursuer.

At this time both vessels were fully thirty miles from Galveston bar, where the squadron lay.

The instant the order was given to clew up the topsails and loose the propeller, there was great excitement on board the *Black Angel*, for it was well known that there was about to be a fight—that is, if the enemy did not turn tail and make his escape. This at one time seemed possible, for the rebel vessel turning short round, he stopped his engines and backed his main top-sail. However, probably the captain of the Yankee had orders from his superior on board the flag-ship to pursue and capture the *Black Angel*, and after a few minutes' delay he came boldly on.

The men of the Confederate cruiser rushed to quarters unbidden. The officers examined their revolvers; muskets and rifles were loaded; the marines drawn up on

the quarter-deck, and by the time the vessel had headed round, all was ready for action.

When within about two hundred yards, the enemy hailed—

“What ship is that?”

In order to make certain as to the character of the question, the reply was—

“Her Britannic Majesty’s ship Ajax. What ship is that?”

No reply.

Presently there was a little consultation going on aboard the other. Old birds are not caught with chaff. The Yankee could not swallow in this, so the rebel commander hailed again—

“What ship is that?”

Still no answer.

Then the Black Angel moved ahead steadily and commenced creeping round, so as to take up a raking position astern.

This, however, was decidedly objected to by the other, which carefully kept his broadside towards the quarry which had so unexpectedly turned.

“What ship is that?”

“The United States steamship Vixen.”

That was enough.

“This is the Confederate States ship of war, the Black Angel. Fire!”

The command was instantly obeyed, and the first shot was fired from the 100-pounder, which, however, was too high. The other guns then took up the refrain, and the clang of the iron hail was distinctly heard as shot and shell struck the enemy’s side.

The fire was returned in about half a minute, and then the battle raged in earnest.

It was dark, but the two vessels were so close that the flash of the firing and the light of the battle-lanterns plainly revealed one to the other.

The combatants steamed slowly on side by side, at times not more than thirty to forty yards apart.

When the shells from the 16-inch gun struck, especially the percussion ones, her whole side was lit up as

they exploded, and great rents, six or seven feet long, were torn in her.

A fierce fire of rifles and revolvers was sent off by the marines and by the officers from their revolvers, for it was at times easy pistol distance.

There was no flurry, no shouting, no wild excitement. The men of the *Black Angel* had settled down in regular fighting trim, discipline and steady valour had taken the place of blind fury.

In a quarter of an hour flames had broken out on board the enemy in two places. They were for the time extinguished only to burst forth again with fresh fury.

Seven men were wounded on board the *Black Angel*, and only one killed, which, considering the short range, were marvellously few.

The fire of the Yankee obviously slackened now and it became pretty evident he was getting the worst of it.

The big gun did splendid service, as did the ten-inch shell piece.

At last, after about half-an-hour's sharp fighting, a shot and a shell struck the enemy close together near the water-line. The shell exploded in the engine-room, piercing the boiler, as was shown by the dense volume of steam which rushed up through the hatchway. The shot passed clean through her, tearing a great gap on either side. This settled the business, as, besides, she was on fire in several places.

Hubert Glynn and two volunteers were just mustering a boarding party, the captain having resolved to take her in that manner, seeing the plight she was in—the men running from their guns, the flames gaining greater ascendancy every moment—when the contest was suddenly put an end to.

She fired two lee guns, one after the other, and entirely ceased replying to the sustained cannonade of the rebel.

Thereupon the order was given, "Cease firing!"

The victorious rebel came up close alongside, and the question was asked—

"Do you surrender?"

"Yes; we are on fire, and sinking."

"Do you want assistance?"

"Yes; we shall be under water in ten minutes."

Thus ended this first sea fight of the *Black Angel* since she had changed her character, and been under the command of her present captain—a fight glorious alike in the manner in which it was conducted and its result.

"All hands out boats!" was the prompt order on hearing that the enemy was sinking, and in a few minutes the crew of the *Vixen*, numbering one hundred and thirty men, were transferred to the *Black Angel*.

It was feared that some of the wounded perished in the flames or went down with her.

So soon as all were transferred on board, full steam was put on and all haste made from the spot, as the firing had undoubtedly been heard by the other vessels of the squadron, which would quickly come to the assistance of their consort.

A great part of the night was occupied in paroling the officers, cleaning up the decks, and putting the prisoners in irons; for, of course, it would have been an act of madness to suffer a hundred and thirty men to be at large among eighty or ninety captors, of whom more than forty would seldom be on duty at a time.

Such a state of affairs would have only invited an attempted mutiny, and caused bloodshed, so the captain wisely resolved in taking what seemed the most severe, but was the most humane course in the long run, and certainly the safest.

This having been done, and an adequate guard set, the watch below went to their hammocks, while the watch on deck were allowed to lie about, and snatch a little sleep.

It is not so much the bodily exertion which fatigues and exhausts in these cases, but excitement, and the overstrung state of the nerves.

Some brave, strong men after a battle become weak and weary all at once. This is caused by the reaction.

In the morning, over the breakfast-table, Captain George, wisely taking example by Stanton Glynne, under whom he had served as lieutenant, took counsel with his officers as to how he should dispose of the prisoners.

It was unanimously decided that it would be dangerous in the extreme to venture near any of the Cuban ports, so, after a brief discussion, Jamaica was decided on, and accordingly the vessel's course was altered so as to make Port Royal.

All went well enough on that day, but towards evening the wind rose, and the barometer as steadily fell. There seemed every chance of a heavy gale from the east, which, with a hundred and fifty prisoners on board, was by no means a pleasant prospect. Moreover, the wind, which had been east, was hauling further to the eastward, and by midnight was dead in the teeth of the ship.

It was absolutely necessary now to push on for Jamaica.

The prisoners, who doubtless suffered greatly, jammed up as they were in a small space between decks, were very riotous, and the officers seriously feared an *emeute*, which would cause great bloodshed—the sentries and guards having orders to fire among them on the least attempt at violence.

No wonder, then, that in this state of affairs, with a falling barometer and most threatening sky, the young commander should feel anxious. The morning was as ugly-looking a one as a sailor could care to see.

Thick, dark, gloomy weather, the wind blowing hard from the east, and a heavy head sea running.

The large number of prisoners rendered the crew very uncomfortable, and when it came on to rain the vessel besides shipped occasionally heavy seas over the bows, the misery of the conquerors was little less than that of the conquered.

Towards noon the gale increased in fury, and as the vessel strained terribly, even under very little steam, the engines were stopped, the propeller hoisted up, and she was hove-to.

Shortly after dark a heavy sea struck her and stove in the bow port. The consequence of this was that the deck was flooded by tons of water, which burst down into the part of the steerage where the prisoners were confined.

It was fortunate the precaution had been taken to put

The Rebel Privateer.

them in irons, otherwise, though unarmed, they certainly would have attempted to overpower their guards.

Their condition was pitiable in the extreme, and the rebel captain almost felt inclined to wish he had not fought the battle which, though it made him conqueror, encumbered him with prisoners to nearly twice the number of his crew.

With the greatest difficulty they were kept from bursting on deck.

Happily towards midnight the gale abated in force, and the wind hauled to the north-west. This eased the strain of the vessel, and caused her to cease taking in water in the way she had done. She leaked badly, however, and half the watch on deck were kept constantly at the pumps.

The morning, however, broke, and things began to assume a more favourable aspect.

The barometer rose, steadily the wind and sea fell, and by the evening the Black Angel was again under steam and sail, making good progress towards Jamaica.

The wind kept fair, and in five days the rebel vessel anchored in Port Royal harbour, Jamaica.

Application was at once made to the governor to land the prisoners, which was as promptly granted, and mutually to the satisfaction of victors and vanquished, the captured crew of the Vixen were landed.

After taking in a fresh supply of provisions and water, the Black Angel put to sea, and proceeded on her cruise.

But at present we have no intention of following her.

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE CALIFORNIAN MAIL PACKET.

HAVING given a chapter to the first sea-fight and victory of the larger of the two rebel privateers, it is but fair we should give a little space to record the doings of the little Fiery Cross.

Two days after parting with the Black Angel she overhauled and captured a Yankee brig, from Aspingwall, bound for Boston. From her captain he got news which caused him to alter his plans and head back for the south-east corner of the Island of Hayti.

The channel between this and Porto Rico is known as the Mona Pass. Stanton Glynne had learned from the master of the brig that whereas the Californian mail packets used to take the course between the Islands of Cuba and San Domingo, they now went by way of the Mona Pass.

An outward-bound steamer was already due, and a homeward-bounder would be in a short time. This latter would be a splendid prize, as she might be expected to have a large quantity of gold on board.

This was why the Fiery Cross was headed back for Porto Rico, instead of keeping on her course across the Atlantic.

Arrived in the channel, the rebel steamer hoisted her screw, and stood on and off under sail, the fires being kept banked up all ready for getting steam up the instant it was necessary.

On the first day several sails came in sight, and were duly overhauled and boarded. Every one, however, had the protection of a neutral cargo.

The night was clear and bright, a young moon and the stars giving so much light as to render it impossible for

a large vessel to pass up or down the channel without being seen.

Everybody was on the tiptoe of excitement, in expectation of the valuable capture to be made. If what the skipper of the Yankee brig said was correct, there could be little fear of missing the packet steamer, and there was reason to believe he was not practising any deception, for he had been promised that his brig, of which he was the part owner, should be permitted to go free if, through his information, so valuable a prize were secured.

His interests were all in favour of the capture of the packet steamer of his own nation, and interest with a genuine Yankee goes a long way.

So the captain of the brig was kept on board, while a prize-crew of half a dozen kept his vessel close in the wake of the Fiery Cross, as she prowled up and down in expectation of her prey. The night passed, but no signs of the expected steamer.

Shortly after dawn, a Yankee schooner was boarded, captured, and burned.

From her there came bad news, to the effect that the Californian steamers no longer came that route, but by the passage between Hayti and Cuba.

This was dispiriting, but still the captain determined to hang on yet another day or two.

Patience, in this instance, was destined to be rewarded. On the third morning the sun rose clear and bright, and there was every prospect of a calm, fine day. The horizon was anxiously scanned for the smoke of the expected steamer, but for a long time in vain.

At last, however, a faint black spot was perceived on the horizon, dead to windward.

The Fiery Cross was too close to the Porto Rico coast, and, as steam was not up, there was a chance of the chase escaping.

However, everything was done that could be. All sail was made, the yards braced to the wind, and the word passed down the engine-room to fire up.

The propeller was shortly lowered, and as steam was gathered on her, it revolved faster and faster, till it was

time to furl the sails and steer a course close to the wind's eye, so as to intercept the vessel, which was now made out to be a large steamer.

She is made out to be a large paddle-wheel, brigantine-rigged, and evidently very fast.

However, the Fiery Cross has got well ahead, and it is soon obvious will succeed in cutting her off or getting within easy range.

Within less than a mile the course is slightly altered, so as to bring the pursuing vessel broadside-on to the chase.

The helmsman, however, overdoes it a little, and the consequence is she drops too far astern. Still, however, it seems almost an impossibility for the paddle-wheel to escape, as each minute the vessels, going on converging courses, approach nearer and nearer.

Larger and larger the chase looms. The large "walking beam" between the paddle-boxes can be seen seesawing up and down. The decks were crowded with people, and in the waist could be distinguished the gleam of steel bayonets and United States uniforms—troops being conveyed to Aspingwall. There appeared to be about 150 of them; and at least 400 passengers.

Swiftly and grimly the Fiery Cross approached her victim. Her pivot-gun, her eight-inch shell, and her starboard battery of twenty-four-pounders, were all cast loose, loaded, and made ready for firing.

When within about a half mile, the rebel hoisted the United States colours and fired a gun.

This was to tempt the chase into an avowal of her nationality.

After a considerable delay, which was unfavourable to the pursuer, up went the stars and stripes to her peak in reply.

Then there came a loud cheer from the rebels. The Yankee ensign was hauled down, and in its place the Confederate flag waved aloft.

Then another blank gun was fired, for the chase to heave-to.

However, she paid no attention to this loud-mouthed order, but went on at increased speed.

She was now well ahead, more than half a mile, the rebel vessel nearly dead astern. This was a very unfavourable position, as, before a gun could be fired, she must be yawed from her course. Evidently she had not any idea of surrendering without, at least, a struggle for escape. Dense masses of black smoke poured from her funnel, evincing that she was firing up.

Captain Glynne kept on after her at full speed for some minutes, at the expiration of which time it was obvious she was gaining fast. She was now nearly three-quarters of a mile ahead.

"Ready with the shell-gun. Put the swivel to starboard afterwards."

Then motioning the helmsman with his hand, he caused her head to swerve to starboard.

"Steady—so. Aim high with the shell-gun, and fire when you are ready."

The next second came the bang of the report and the whiz of the missile through the air.

The captain's hurried order to aim high had been too well obeyed, for the shell went far above her topgallant-masts, and plunged into the sea more than half a mile ahead of her.

"Starboard your helm!"

Then off she paid to port, and the pivot-gun was fired, the shot tearing through her rigging in dangerous proximity.

After a moment's pause, to see if she would obey the summons, the vessels were again yawed to port.

"Lower; aim lower!" cried Stanton Glynne. "She must not escape us. Let her have it in the hull, my men."

Bang—rush!

Immediately the top of the funnel was seen to totter and fall; a shower of white splinters flew from her foremast. Still, however, she seemed as though inclined to keep on her course, notwithstanding she was obviously in such easy range.

Each moment, however, increased her distance, as besides being the swifter of the two, the pursuer lost a great deal every discharge, by reason of having to yaw to the starboard and port.

"This won't do; train both pivot and shell guns to starboard!" cried Stanton Glynne; "ready with the broadside also. If he won't listen to reason, we must teach him. I would have spared him if I could, for the sake of the passengers."

As she paid off to put to, the captain himself gave the word of command:

"Steady, with the shell-gun. Fire! Steady, with the pivot. Fire!"

Bang—boom, the two guns went in quick succession. The roar of the iron missiles was distinctly heard through the air, and again the splinters were seen to fly. The shot struck her bowsprit, which was cut right in two, bringing with it the fore-topmast; the shell apparently hulled her, but where could not be decided. The next moment, however, the fact was patent enough, for there was heard the report of the shell on board of her, and the smoke was seen rising above the deck.

Almost immediately the broadside guns were fired, and by the time the smoke cleared away it was seen that the chase had surrendered, for her flag was hauled down and her paddles ceased to revolve.

A boat was at once sent on board, and she was taken possession of. It was found that she was indeed the outward-bound Californian mail-packet, having on board a crew of sixty, one hundred and fifty soldiers, and four hundred and twenty passengers—six hundred and thirty in all.

What was to be done with such a prize? The decks of the little Fiery Cross would never have held them all—would not even allow standing room.

This was a matter for serious deliberation; in the meantime a prize crew was sent on board, and her captain ordered to report himself to the rebel commander. The soldiers were disarmed and paroled, as were the officers. Four chronometers, three rifled twenty-four-pounder guns, seven hundred new rifles, forty barrels of cartridges, and a quantity of stores were in a short time transferred to the captor.

It was ascertained that she had on board also one hundred barrels of gunpowder. It was this only, the

captain told Stanton Glynne, which caused him to surrender.

The rebel commander's reply was, that he must have been a madman to risk the lives of so many passengers—that he was worse than a madman.

"I declare before Heaven," the young commander said, generously, "that if I had been aware of that fact, I would have let you escape rather than I would have fired a shell into or over you."

After a consultation, it was decided to lie by the prize in hopes of the homeward-bound Californian steamer coming in sight.

The very thought of such a prize made the sailors smack their lips.

Sometimes these homeward-bound gold ships carried the precious metal to the value of a million dollars.

This having been decided on, the Fiery Cross hauled off to a distance from her prize, about eight miles, so as to be just within signalling distance. Under this arrangement it would be impossible for the other steamer to pass through the channel in the day-time without being observed.

At night the two vessels were approached nearer to each other in order that the captured mail steamer might be within range in case her crew, passengers, or the soldiers should break their parole, and endeavour to make a bolt of it.

It was a wretched time for the poor passengers. They were put on short allowance of water and provisions, and all the reply they could get to their remonstrances and entreaties to be allowed to proceed, was—

"What you suffer now is nothing to what our people suffer from your cursed hireling soldiers."

This, so far as it went, was unanswerable, because true. Doubtless many of those on board had urged on with all their influence a war of extermination against the Southerners.

Two days passed in this manner; but on the third smoke on the distant horizon betokened the approach of a steamer.

All hearts beat high with hope, and the necessary pre-

parations were made to deceive and capture the stranger, if possible, without firing a shot.

So the Fiery Cross took up her position about a mile from the prize, and both steamed on together slowly in the direction of the strange vessel.

As the time passed on, and the three vessels approached nearer and nearer, it became evident that it was at any rate a large steamer. The best judges, as soon as her hull could be made out, declared that it certainly was the Californian mail-boat. On she came, steadily, under a full head of steam.

A large paddle steamer, barque-rigged, a very large steamer obviously; some thought too large for the mail-boat.

"By thunder, she's armed!" cried Stanton Glynne, hastily.

"I can make out guns."

This created great excitement

What was to be done?

This was now settled. Stand and fight, if there was the least chance of success. At all events, wait till the stranger came close enough for them to decide what she was.

The United States flag was of course flying from the peak of both vessels, and it was hoped that this, in conjunction with the pacific appearance of the paddle-steamer, would effectually deceive the other.

A dozen men were placed on the bridge of the captured packet by order of Captain Glynne, with orders to shoot any one instantly who should dare to attempt to signal or attract attention in any way.

That the rebel commander's words were true when he said the approaching steamer was armed was now obvious enough. Two black muzzles could be seen protruding on either side, and a large gun, which was pronounced to be a 10-inch shell, amidships.

As she came nearer, it could be observed that she too was crowded with passengers, and also carried troops.

"There will be a fight," said Stanton Glynne, shutting up his glass with a bang, after steadfastly regarding the stranger for some time. "I can see them spying out

and casting loose the guns; that felon's rigging being cut about has made them suspicious. Mr. Wharncliffe, take a boat and go on board the prize at once. Look out for a signal from me, and when you get it, disable her engines instantly, and come aboard with all hands except one and a midshipman in command. Take the second engineer with you. We'll prove how to cripple her. We must have all our men; by thunder, I'm dead sure there'll be a fight."

Lieutenant Wharncliffe departed on his errand, and in a quarter of an hour the captured steamer was rendered incapable of escaping by means of steam.

The engineer took the "bonnet" off her steam-chest, and two of the valves. Sail was set, and the Fiery Cross slackening speed, the two vessels still moved slowly onwards in a parallel direction, distant now less than half a mile from each other.

Wharncliffe then took away with him all the prize crew, and the steamer was now left under the sole charge of the one man, and a midshipman at the helm.

The lieutenant warned the passengers that if any attempt to escape were made, or if the crew refused to obey the officer in command, the Fiery Cross would immediately open with grape and shell from the starboard battery.

The instant that the boat bringing back the lieutenant and the prize-crew reached the side, a blank gun was fired from the rebel cruiser.

The strange vessel slackened speed, but still continued to come on cautiously, as though reconnoitering.

The situation was indeed of a nature to puzzle one unacquainted with the facts.

A large vessel, with her bowsprit, fore-topmast, and part of her funnel shot away, bearing also other marks of ill-usage. Another vessel, a clipper-looking black steamer, with guns on either broadside, besides a large shell and pivot gun, steaming slowly alongside the other, which, though a steamer, was under sail only. There was evidently some mystery here, and the strange steamer behaved with caution accordingly.

Stanton Glynne could now make out that ~~she~~ was not

a Republican steamer, but a mail-boat, mounted with heavy guns; nevertheless, she might prove a dangerous customer. A lucky shot from one big piece he espied, which looked like a large ten or twelve-inch shell gun, might send the Confederate to the bottom. Presently, the stranger altered her course, and seemed desirous of taking up a raking position across the bows of the Fiery Cross. This, however, was evaded by the rebel vessel. Then Stanton Glynne caused another blank gun to be fired.

The other steamer went ahead, and the broadsides of the two were close to each other as the stars and stripes went up to her peak.

Then down came the Union flag from the peak of the rebel, and up went the Confederate ensign.

Instantly there was a tremendous commotion on board the other. The greater part of the passengers had already gone below; those who had not quickly did; and in two minutes the decks were cleared for action. It was obvious she did not mean to surrender without a fight, so the Confederate captain gave the order to fire, and a crushing volley was poured in. The broadside guns told, but the two big ones were badly aimed, and the shot went bristling through the air between the enemy's masts. The fire was returned with tolerable promptitude, and as quickly as possible the guns of the Fiery Cross were again loaded and discharged; this time with better effect.

Stanton Glynne's conjecture that the enemy had a big shell-gun soon proved to be correct, for a shell presently exploded between decks, killing two, wounding seven, and setting fire to some of the planks. It was promptly put out, however, and the action went on, the Yankee getting all the worst of it.

This is not surprising, for she was not built for a war vessel, nor even sufficiently strengthened. Her crew, too, had not been well-disciplined to great guns, and the rebels fired three times to her twice.

Great rents were soon visible in her sides, one of her masts went by the board, her engines were partially disabled, and fire was seen in several places. Her two

broadside guns had ceased firing, but shells kept coming at intervals from the big one.

The Fiery Cross was between her and the captured packet.

A shell from the Yankee passed between the masts of the latter, and plunged full into the prize. It exploded.

The explosion was succeeded by one of a terrific character.

A broad sheet of flame shot up. There was a roaring concussion, a terrible shock, succeeded by volumes of black smoke.

The outward-bound packet had been blown up by a shell from the homeward-bounder.

The air was thick for full a minute with pieces of burning timber, sparks, and *débris*. The gunpowder smoke was suffocating, and wrapped everything in a grey pall.

The firing ceased on both sides in view of this awful calamity.

When the smoke cleared away, the Yankee was seen lying about a quarter of a mile off on fire in two places.

A shotted gun was fired, as a question whether she meant to surrender or not, which was answered by the slow descent of the Union flag.

Of the other steamer nothing remained but floating pieces of wreck. Several unfortunates, however, were observed clinging to these fragments; and so soon as this was observed, Stanton Glynne gave the order to get the boats out.

One was sent to take possession of the other vessel, while all the others rowed about the scene of the catastrophe, seeking to save as many as they could.

Alas! it was but few; there were plenty of blackened and disfigured corpses floating about, but of the 630, crew, passengers, and soldiers on board, only about twenty were picked up.

"Thank God!" the rebel captain cried, with heartfelt thankfulness, "that it was not a shell from our vessel which caused this terrible catastrophe."

There was no shouting and enthusiasm on this capture,

valuable as it was supposed to be. The awful calamity just witnessed had cast a gloom on all. It was terrible to think of weak women and innocent children hurled into the air, without warning, to come down blackened, mutilated corpses.

The decks were cleaned down, the guns secured, and the wounded, to the number of nine, attended to. Three on board the *Fiery Cross* were killed in the fight. The bodies of these were brought on deck, and laid on the lee-side, covered with sail cloth, ready for committal to the deep.

A lee-gun was fired now from the other Yankee mail-boat, and attention was now directed to her. A lieutenant had already boarded her, and taken possession, and finding her on fire in several places, had directed the gun to be fired for assistance.

The boats were recalled from the wreck, the few survivors taken on board, and then thirty men were sent on board the burning ship.

The *Fiery Cross* was ranged close up alongside, it being now almost dead calm, and a volume of water thrown on the decks of the Yankee by means of the steam-pumps and hose.

In half an hour the fire was extinguished, and it was found that the vessel was so badly injured as to render it difficult to keep her afloat.

The captain was asked what induced him, crowded as he was with passengers, to risk a combat. He replied, "that he was ordered to fight—that the guns were put on board for that purpose."

And now came the work of overhauling the prize—a valuable one, indeed. She had on board thirty thousand ounces of Californian gold, with more than half a million of dollars, or a hundred thousand pounds.

The share of each man on board in this splendid haul would be eight hundred pounds—the petty officers would be, of course, much more.

The question now became what to do with her. Under all the circumstances, the rebel commander inclined to the side of mercy, and was disposed to let her go on her course.

The gold was got on board, as were all the other valuables, except passengers' baggage, which was scrupulously respected.

Before finally allowing the vessel to go on, the lieutenant who had charge of her called out from the poop whether any of her men wished to volunteer for service in the Fiery Cross.

Twenty at least came forward; and one, acting as spokesman, asked whether they would be allowed a share in the prize money realized by the captured gold.

The lieutenant said he was unable to answer the question, but must leave it entirely to the captain.

Twelve volunteered, the rest hanging back. This was a very welcome addition to the scanty crew of the rebel vessel.

The prize crew and the twelve volunteers were put on board the Fiery Cross, and then the Californian mail steamer, Juno, was allowed to go on her way, first, however, being compelled to dip her ensign as a parting salute to the saucy little rebel.

The Fiery Cross was not now headed to the eastward in pursuance of the captain's plan of a raid up the Straits of Gibraltar.

So soon as the decks were cleared and damages repaired, the fires were allowed to go out, and the attention of the rebel vessel was directed solely to making her way across the Atlantic under sail. Several Yankee vessels and many more neutrals persisted in falling in her track; and were boarded, captured, and committed to flames.

On the fourth day after the capture of the Californian steamer, a large ship, the Montmorency, of Philadelphia, was overhauled. She was laden with coals, about one hundred tons of which were transferred, and then, as the weather looked nasty, and the Cross was encumbered with prisoners, they were all put on board the prize, and a ransom bond of twenty-thousand dollars having been taken, she was permitted to go on her course.

The wind blew a hard gale from the north-east, nearly dead in the ship's teeth, and daily the boisterous trade-wind increased in violence. There was now but forty

days' water on board, so it became a matter of moment to make the best of the way across the Atlantic.

In the course of a week from the date of the capture of the Californian steamer, the little rebel had only made one hundred miles on her course across the Atlantic. During that time she had come across seven of the enemy's vessels, and had on board sixty prisoners.

This was a serious embarrassment, and it became necessary to adopt precautions. One half were kept constantly in irons, taking it turn and turn about to submit to the necessary but disagreeable infliction.

The aspect of the weather grew daily worse, and with a falling barometer gave good grounds for uneasiness; the prisoners numbering nearly as many as the crew, rendered things very unpleasant.

At noon on the 24th December, the day before Christmas-day, the gale raged fiercer than ever. The little vessel, struggling closely against the storm, pitched and laboured very much. She leaked so much, that though economy of coal was of great moment, it was thought advisable to get a fire up and set the donkey engines to work, in order to keep her free from water.

On the eve of Christmas-day, the flying jib-boom went, and immediately afterwards the fore-topmast.

Fortunately, the wind hauled round to the southward, and she was enabled to scud before the gale.

On went the rebel cruiser with varying fortune—now running a race with a whale or a shoal of porpoises—rolling and tumbling in the storm, with ports barricaded, guns secured, and donkey engines constantly going.

The bad weather and consequent confinement commenced to tell on the health of the crew; and those terrible scourges—dysentery and scurvy—began to make their appearance. At one time there were more than twenty on the sick list.

There now remained only water enough for thirty days, and all hands were put on an allowance of two quarts a day.

Christmas-day dawned dimly enough on the little vessel. Stormy, raining, an overcast sky, and a leaky ship; such was the miserable state of affair.

The prisoners were most unruly, and, but for the strictest precautions, would have broken out in open mutiny.

The Fiery Cross was now right out of the track of commerce, and would be so for another week. With the wind from the south-west, she made good progress, and by the last days of December, all hands looked forward with hope to the conclusion of the wretched passage.

On the 31st December the ship was, by calculations, in latitude 22 deg. N., longitude 95 W., just within the tropic of Cancer, and between the Cape Verde Islands and the Azores.

As there was neither land nor vessels to be looked for in this part of the globe, when the look-out shouted from the mast-head, "Land ho! dead ahead," the announcement was received with incredulity.

"Where away?" cried the captain.

Thereupon Stanton Glynne, confident that the man had made some mistake, mounted to the foretop-sail yard, and commenced a careful search with the telescope.

He came down and informed his officers that land there undoubtedly was right ahead. Then there was much anxious looking over charts, without anything being decided on.

What land could it be?

That was the question. It was not down in any chart.

Somebody suggested that it must be an undiscovered island, and in that light the rebel commander was inclined to look on it.

As the ship drew nearer to this mysterious land in mid ocean, it was seen to be a rugged island, surrounded by islets and reefs. The lead was set going, and when within a mile or so of the nearest reef no soundings could be obtained even at two hundred fathoms.

Having hoisted the main-topsail yard, the captain and two of his officers rowed to this strange land, and soon found abundant evidence that it was uninhabited, and had never been trodden by the foot of man. The creeks and passages were swarming with fish, and the

sandy beach was densely peopled with birds, which evinced not the slightest dread of harm, but suffered the sailors to come close enough to touch them on the head with oars.

Penguins, boobies, and the black man-of-war bird, occupied the island in prodigious multitudes, their eggs thickly strewn the sandy beach.

The ground rose gradually from the sea-shore, and in a few minutes the exploring party stood on a sandy ridge, commanding a good view of the sea and the island, or rather group.

Wharncliffe and two midshipmen alone accompanied the captain, the men being left with the boat.

An exclamation of delight and surprise broke from the first-lieutenant at the view which met his eyes as he turned them inland.

A lake or inland sea was the first object which attracted his attention; but this alone was not the cause of his exclamation. He noticed that at several points little streams of water ran into the lake.

"Fresh water!" he cried, "this is glorious." Stanton Glynne proceeded to walk in a direction parallel to the shore of the lake.

"There must be a communication with the sea somewhere," he said; "let us find it."

"This appears to be a species of reservoir for the streams which we see constantly pouring their contents into it," said Wharncliffe.

"All the more reason that there must be a communication with the ocean," said the captain, "or otherwise this basin or lake would soon overflow. Come, let us search and find it." This they succeeded in doing after an hour's plodding along the sandy shore.

A narrow tortuous passage formed the communication between this freshwater lake and the sea beyond.

"I judge there is sufficient depth of water in this short piece of river or canal between the sea and the lake for a large vessel."

A closer inspection convinced them that his conjecture was well founded. The passage did not run straight out into the open sea, but pursued a tortuous course, passing

for a considerable distance in a direction parallel with the beach. The stream flowed steadily on from the lake, and on tasting, the water was found to be quite fresh.

They walked along by the side of this uneven winding channel or watercourse for fully two miles. As they went on, the banks became higher, and just as it approached the sea, it was bounded on either side by high precipitous rocks, which seemed to be perfectly inaccessible.

At places the channel was so narrow as to render it impossible for more than one vessel to pass along at a time, though inside at the bottom of the lake a whole fleet might ride at anchor, unobserved and in perfect security.

After a careful examination, the rebel commander came to the conclusion that there was but this one passage. The place was admirably adapted by nature for concealment; or in case of discovery by enemies, for defence.

In the rocks on either side of the narrow passage were numerous hollows and caves of different sizes. These might easily be amplified into store rooms and warehouses.

They had brought a small flag and staff with them, which Captain Glynne proceeded to erect on a prominent point of high ground.

"And now we will hasten back to the ship, and—eastward, ho!" he cried, after hoisting the Confederate flag, and watching it flutter in the breeze.

"Of course you will send the boats ashore with water-cases, in order to replenish——"

"Not for worlds; rather would I put all hands on one quart a day."

Lieutenant Wharnccliffe stared in genuine surprise.

"This water is excellent," he said; "we may be a month before we make a port."

"It cannot be helped if we are two months. The men may capture as many birds on the sea-beach as they can, but I by no means intend to let them know there is an abundance of fresh water and a good harbour behind these ridges of arid sand."

"Ah! I perceive. You wish to keep this place a secret?"

"Yes; remember our prisoners. We must land them at the first port; and if they knew there was such a splendid retreat, they would report it to the Yankee Consul, or to the first war-ship of the enemy. They would fear that I should return here. Don't you perceive the value of this place as a rendezvous and *dépôt*? No more burning ships, my friend. For the future, we will convey all our prizes to this place, and let them lie till the end of the war. By Jove! if we have luck, in a few months' time we may have a whole fleet of merchantmen, and goods to the value of millions of dollars."

Stanton Glynne then proceeded to explain how he proposed to act under the circumstances. It is, of course, a great point that no suspicion should be entertained by the prisoners of the true nature of the place; and to this effect secrecy was strictly enjoined, even as regarded their own men.

"Sailors will talk. As it is, there are but four persons alive who know the secrets of this island. Indeed, we ourselves have scarcely explored it all. We have seen enough, however, for our purpose—having discovered that there is both water, wood, and a secure retreat. Probably in the interior it may be as fertile as it is beautiful. We will get rid of our prisoners, procure as many more men as we can in foreign ports, and then, when we make a capture, we will, in place of burning ship and cargo, despatch her hither under the charge of as small a prize crew as possible. Then, when we have sent on some dozen vessels or so, we will ourselves repair hither, refit, provision, and take in more water. Come, let us be off. Do not let your countenance any more than your words betray the fact that we have discovered something."

Before dusk the Fiery Cross was again standing to the eastward, under sail.

Stanton Glynne, before leaving, made careful observations, and accurately noted down the latitude and longitude of this island.

"It has been a constant boast and taunt of the

Yankees," he said, "that though we claim to have a navy, we do not possess a single port unblockaded into which we can carry a prize. I fancy that the discovery of this island will obviate that.'

22° 15' N. was the latitude, 25° 36' W. longitude. It lay just within the tropic of Cancer, about five days' sail from the Cape Verde Islands.

The boat's crew were given to understand that the island was barren, desolate, and destitute of water, or aught else which could make it available, and with this conviction among the men, the rebel privateer bore up on her course for Europe.

The weather shortly moderated, and enabled the weary mariners to take some rest from the laborious pumping which had occupied so much of their time lately.

More Prizes.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

MORE PRIZES.

IN ten days' time from when the island was sighted, the Fiery Cross had again arrived in the track of commerce. On the eleventh day steam was got up, and several vessels were overhauled. On the twelfth day, thirty-five sails were sighted and overhauled. The result was, that among them there was not one single Yankee, a pretty good proof of the good service the rebel privateers had done.

In the middle watch of this night, Cadiz light was sighted, and the vessel ran on to within four or five miles of it, where she lay to till morning.

The day broke wet and gloomy, the land being obscured by heavy rain squalls; but shortly after the pilot came on board, however, it cleared up, and the city and harbour of Cadiz lay unfolded to the gaze of the weary mariners of the Fiery Cross.

The port was crowded with shipping; but unfortunately, there were very few Yankees; so great was the alarm the rebel cruisers had excited, even those which were there were unable to get freights.

The vessel was terribly in want of repairs, leaking badly in several places.

Early in the afternoon an armed boat came alongside, with an officer bringing a letter from the governor, to the effect that the vessel must proceed to sea in twenty-four hours, but would be allowed to procure necessary supplies, though not coal.

To this arbitrary and absurd order a vigorous remonstrance was sent.

“C. S. Steamer Fiery Cross,

Cadiz, January 5, 1863.

“SIR,—I have had the honour to receive an order from you on behalf of the Spanish Government, order-

ing me to proceed to sea at once. I am greatly surprised thereat, and beg to inform you it is impossible I should comply. It is the practice of all civilized nations to extend the hospitality of their ports to the belligerents of both parties alike. I am aware that Spain, in common with the other Great Powers, refuses permission to either party bringing their prizes into their ports; but this rule in my case has not been violated. I have entered the harbour of Cadiz with my single ship, which is leaking badly, in want of repairs—in fact, in a thoroughly crippled condition. I may add that in her present state it is impossible for her to proceed to sea. She will require to be docked, and thoroughly overhauled before she is fit for service. Furthermore, I have on board above sixty prisoners, confined in irons within a narrow space, greatly to their discomfort and that of my crew. Simple humanity would seem to dictate that I should be permitted to put them ashore, leaving them to the care of their Consul. I beg to observe that permission to land prisoners in a like case was at once given by the authorities at the Spanish port of Cienfuegos, where I received every courtesy and attention.

“I have the honour to be, sir, your most obedient servant,

“STANTON GLYNNE.

“To his Excellency the Governor of
the port of Cadiz, Spain.”

This letter produced the intended effect, and the telegraph was set to work to get instructions from Madrid. The Queen despatched an order, authorizing the vessel to discharge her prisoners, and make all necessary repairs.

Accordingly she was hauled up into dock, and men were at once set to work to make her seaworthy.

This took a week, during which time there was much difficulty with some of the crew, who overstayed their liberty time. This was the more vexatious, as news was received that six of the enemy's war-vessels were in hot pursuit.

At last, however, the truants were all on board, and

once more the rebel cruiser put to sea. The cruise could only be a short one, by reason of deficiency of coal, a supply of which no persuasion would induce the muddle-headed officials to grant. They were evidently in a dreadful state of trepidation, for fear of complications with the United States Government.

During the next week eleven vessels under the enemy's flag were captured. These were all brigs and schooners except one, a fine barque. Prize crews were put on board all of these, and they were then despatched to the rendezvous.

The necessity of putting enough men on board to navigate them caused the Fiery Cross to be very short-handed. At the end of the week there was only coal sufficient for three days; so it was determined to run into Gibraltar for more fuel, and also in the hope of shipping more seamen.

Stanton Glynne had heard that a large English vessel had been shipwrecked close to that fort, and that her crew were all on shore there under the care of the British Consul. If twenty or thirty of these men could be induced to join, it would be a perfect godsend to the little vessel.

So under a press of sail the Fiery Cross stood in for Gibraltar, which port she reached after a fortnight's cruise.

Scarcely had she been at anchor an hour when four vessels, without any distinctive flag, put to sea in a most suspiciously hurried manner. As one of them was a fine large ship of fully a thousand tons, the Fiery Cross started in pursuit, at first under sail only. Steam was got up as quickly as possible, and one by one the vessels were overhauled and examined. All of them were Yankees; and three, including the large vessel, were at once made prizes. The fourth escaped by reason of a neutral cargo. Prize crews were put on board, and they were all despatched to the Atlantic rendezvous.

This sudden raid on the part of the rebel ship threatened at one time to bring about unpleasant complications. The governor of Gibraltar sent an officer on board, with an order for the Confederate cruiser to pro-

ceed to sea at once, as he would not allow the port to be used as a station for the Fiery Cross to be at anchor, for the purpose of darting out and seizing her prey in the Straits.

This would have been a terrible misfortune, as there was not more than two days' coal on board.

However, a personal visit to the governor put all straight. Captain Glynne disclaimed any intention of violating the neutrality of the port, and requested permission to coal, which after some little demur was granted.

In the course of a couple of days the coal-bunkers were all filled.

Fortunately, too, Captain Glynne was enabled to ship twenty-four men lately belonging to the English ship which was wrecked.

Thus strengthened in every way, the rebel privateer once more put to sea, shaping her course up the Straits into the Mediterranean.

A month's cruise brought the following results :—

The first capture was the barque Ocmulzee, 500 tons, laden with a general cargo. All her valuables were taken on board as well as her crew of thirty men ; and the vessel sent on to the Atlantic rendezvous with a prize crew of six only. The Alert, a vessel of 700 tons, was captured and burnt, and her crew put into her own long boat within sight of the French coast—distant about thirty miles from Marseilles. The next prizes were the schooners Weather-gauge, Benjamin Tucker, Virginia, and Parker. The crews of these were taken out, and all of them sent on to the island. Then there fell into the next a new barque of Portland, State of Maine—the Elijah Dunbar. Next the Brilliant, the Emily Farmer, and the Wave Crest. These were burnt and their crews put into their own boats in sight of land. The ship Manchester and the barques Lamplighter and Lafayette were the next victims, and were all sent on under prize crews. Then came the schooners Grimshaw, Lauretta, and Constantine, all of which were burnt. The ships Martha and Polynesia, having on board valuable cargoes, were captured and sent on.

The crew of the **Fiery Cross** was now so much weakened by the loss of the men put on board the prizes, that it became necessary to adopt a different plan with future captures. This was to put a midshipman and one man on board, and navigate them with the assistance of their own crews, keeping in company with the steamer.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

NEWS FROM HOME.

ANOTHER week's cruise added fifteen to the number of captures made by the Fiery Cross ; and with this fleet of prizes the rebel vessel's head was once more turned to the westward.

As she passed within sight of Gibraltar under sail and easy steam, just keeping ahead of her convoy, she excited not a little attention and curiosity. Although she was again in want of coal, it was judged advisable to keep on her course and make the island rendezvous. One of the vessels already sent on was loaded with the "black diamonds;" and the captain preferred to make his way thither as best he could, and coal at his leisure. Fortunately the wind blew a strong breeze from the north-east, and the weather was clear and fine.

Arrived near the latitude of the rendezvous, all the prisoners were put on board a large barque, the Washington. There were 150 in all ; and having given the barque provisions and water sufficient for two months, she was allowed to proceed whither her crew chose to take her.

They elected to return to the Straits ; and after lying to till she was well on her way, the rebel steamer with her convoy of prizes stood in for the island, which was safely reached the next day.

The secret had been well kept. Great was the surprise and delight of the weary men when the captain explained to them, in a brief speech, that they were to have a week's run ashore to recruit, with abundance of water and provisions, and but little work to do.

He divided them into three parties ; two out of the three to have liberty to do as they pleased, catching birds and turtles, fishing, and collecting eggs ; the remaining third

were employed under the command of the captain in person in making the best of the resources of the island. The captured vessels, to the number of twenty-four in all, were one by one towed up the little river and moored alongside the shore in a convenient creek, and the work of unloading proceeded with. Several of the natural caverns were cleared out, the floors levelled and adapted as warehouses. In the course of a few days the cargoes of all the vessels had been landed and carefully stored; all perishable articles being piled in the driest and most secure of these natural caverns. The ammunition and warlike stores were placed in one, which was called the magazine, over which there was planted a white flag. The coals had a cavern to themselves. It was found that after all the bunkers of the Fiery Cross were filled, there still remained about four hundred tons. These would come in very serviceable at a future time, as would the great quantity of provisions taken from the captured vessels. The valuables, chronometers, gold and specie, were kept on board. Some time was spent in improving and fortifying this harbour of refuge; the only port all round the world where the rebel cruisers could hope to enter without running the gauntlet of the enemy's vessels.

The brushwood and trees near the banks of the creek were cleared away, and in several parts artificial landing places were formed. By the time all these arrangements were made and the ship got ready for sea again, it wanted nearly six weeks of the date appointed for the meeting with the other rebel privateer, the Black Angel, at the Cape of Good Hope. The passage might be accomplished in four or five weeks, but then there was a chance it might be prolonged much beyond that time. Under the circumstances Captain Glynne thought it advisable to hurry on what was to be done, and put to sea again.

The southward course to the Cape would be distinguished by the light of burning vessels, as it was determined to burn all that were captured until the meeting with the Black Angel came about. So after a fortnight's recruiting on shore, the crew of the rebel privateer were once more on board, and at sunset, on an evening early

in March, the Fiery Cross emerged from her hiding place, once more to play havoc with the enemy's commerce.

Meanwhile the larger vessel—some time the United States steam-sloop of war Mohican—was not idle.

Disdaining the smaller craft, schooners, brigs, barques, and such like, which the Fiery Cross snapped up, she sailed leisurely down in the track of the homeward-bound Indiamen and China ships.

Seventeen vessels, the majority of them over a thousand tons, were captured and burnt, and twice as many more released and bonded on account of neutral cargo, by the Black Angel.

But she had no such run of luck as the Fiery Cross in coming upon a Californian gold steamer, nor in discovering an island such as that where the latter had taken her prizes and stored their cargoes. Nevertheless, though her crew had not been benefited in an equal degree as their more fortunate comrades under the command of Stanton Glynne, immense damage was done to the commerce of the enemy.

The Black Angel was off the Cape of Good Hope more than a week before the appointed time, and remained cruising on the foggy and storm-ridden banks of Agulhas, lying in wait for Indiamen returning home.

The weather was very severe, so much so that after a week's cruising it was thought advisable to bear up for Table Bay, where she anchored ten days before the appointed time.

A heavy gale was blowing, and she lay with sixty fathoms of chain to one anchor, and a hundred to the other. The aspect of the scene was weird-like and dismal in the extreme. Table Mountain was capped by an immense volume of snow-like cloud, the angry water of the bay breaking into foam till all the expanse of sea was white.

Bad news was received from the rival forces on the home battle-field. Vicksburg and Port Hudson had fallen after a splendid resistance. The Northern General Rosencranz was marching northward; and General Lee had been forced to re-cross the Potomac, after the desperate battle of Gettysburg.

Altogether things looked very, very gloomy for the Southern cause.

Hubert Glynn, on receiving the intelligence of this succession of disasters, fell into a state of deep gloom. Captain George and his brother officers vainly strove to cheer him up. "I tell you," said he, "I feel as though I were a deserter from the ranks; the issue will not be decided by the capture of a score or two of Yankee merchantmen. If we are to achieve independence, we must strike at higher game. I have an idea, a grand idea, and if I can only find some to join me I will carry it out."

"Let me hear it."

"Before the commencement of this war, Abraham Lincoln, the Yankee President, had to pass in disguise through Baltimore to Washington. Had he been captured, there would have been no war. Could he be now captured, the whole North would be thrown into a state of anarchy and confusion. It is only the Puritanical New Englanders who support the President, and urge on a war of extermination. Maryland is for separation and peace, as are most of the middle States. I have come to this conclusion, that Abraham Lincoln alone stands between my country and her independence."

"What do you propose?"

"I propose to capture him. I have been thinking over it for days."

"It seems impracticable to me."

"I do not think so. It would be dangerous, but it is not impossible."

"In the first place, a number of our men would have to assemble in Washington."

"Half a dozen could do it."

"Any one discovered would be certainly hanged as a spy."

"Undoubtedly, any one who should attempt it would have to be prepared for that little unpleasantness. The more I think of it, the more certain I feel that to strike at the Yankee President is the true way to achieve independence for our country."

"You would not kill him?"

"I am not an assassin. No! I would make him prisoner and carry him to a safe place—in the Southern States, if possible."

"Perchance, he might enact the rôle of Regulus, and though in captivity urge on his party to fresh exertions."

"He might do so, but the Federals have not the spirit of the Romans of old."

No more was said on that occasion, but it was evident that Hubert Glynne had not dismissed the idea from his mind.

The next day the Fiery Cross came in, her flag at half-mast.

The cause of this was soon revealed; Hubert Glynne received the news in gloomy silence. His brother placed in his hand a New Orleans paper which had been taken from a Yankee vessel captured a few days previously. Therein was a paragraph relating to the death of a young Southern lady who had been cast into prison by order of General Butler, for aiding in the escape of her brother. The brother was Hubert Glynne; the lady, his sister, the gentle Maude.

Stanton and Hubert said very little on the subject; their hearts were too full to speak.

Application had been made, it appeared, to the President by the friends of Maude Glynne, but he had declined to interfere.

"What of the girl Lola?" asked Hubert.

"There is no mention of her," replied his brother, "but I learn from a prisoner taken in one of the prizes, a man who was in New Orleans two months ago, that she had been compelled to leave New Orleans to avoid the persecution of Butler. This man can, I think, be relied on, as he has volunteered, and I have made him a boatswain's mate. And so the amiable Northern President, 'honest old Abe,' as some of his admirers delight to call him, will not interfere to protect an innocent girl from the brutality of a wretch like Butler?"

The Fiery Cross had many more prisoners, all of whom

were landed and transferred to the care of the American Consul. Then, after a brief stay, in order to allow the crews of the vessels a promised run on shore, the two rebel cruisers prepared to put to sea again.

The vessels were crowded with visitors during their stay in Table Bay, all of whom evinced sympathy for the Southern cause. After a week spent in replenishing the supply of coal and stores, the two ships once more put out to sea. Hubert Glynne was most anxious for facilities to be afforded him to put in execution a plan he had formed. But the two commanders of the vessels overruled him, and it was decided that at all events another six months' cruise should be accomplished. The Black Angel was appointed to cruise in the China seas; whilst the Fiery Cross headed for the homeward station, the rendezvous being at the island in the North Atlantic in six months' time.

Hubert Glynne drooped greatly at this arrangement, declaring that while they were wasting time burning brigs and schooners, the Yankee hordes were bearing hard on the unhappy Confederates.

"At all events, when we do get back, I will put my plan in execution: it shall be sink or swim. I will risk all on this."

By dint of constant reference to the same subject he almost forced the captain of the vessel to pay some heed, and by the force of his own determination and conviction of the feasibility of his scheme, caused Captain George at last to listen favourably to what he at first thought a mad project.

CHAPTER XXXV.

A CHARMING ACTRESS, AND HER ADMIREE.

ANOTHER six months has rolled on, and fortune has gone hard with the Confederates. Lee, with constantly diminishing forces, has hitherto manfully opposed Grant, who has but to ask for men to receive them.

Wearied out, weakened, half-starved, ill-clothed, scarcely shod at all, the gallant General of the Confederates' "army of Virginia"—victors in a dozen pitched battles—still presents a bold front to the ruthless enemy.

But the limit of human endurance is fast approaching; vainly do the enfeebled Confederates beat back assault after assault, each time inflicting terrible losses on the too-persistent enemy. When one Federal soldier is disabled, there are a dozen to take his place; when a Confederate falls, there is a gap in the ranks never, alas! to be filled up.

The war has become a simple matter of arithmetic—the Yankees can afford to lose two, three, or four to one, and yet win at last.

In the city of Washington—thrice in imminent danger from a Confederate army—all is confidence and exultation. Concert halls, liquor-bars, and theatres are all in full swing. If there is a scarcity of gold, what matter? there is an abundance of greenbacks.

At this time there reigned supreme in the theatrical world of Washington a beautiful actress, who had made her *début* some few weeks previously. She was advertised in the bills as an ex-slave from Louisiana, and as she herself did not contradict it, it might be taken as true. Tragic and melodramatic parts were those this young lady chose, and with such signal success, as to enable her to name her own terms to the manager of Ford's Theatre, after her first preliminary engagement of a month.

That she was exceedingly beautiful there could be no question; no one pretended to aver the contrary; and that she was also a splendid elocutionist and actress there were few who denied.

That she should be sought after by wealthy admirers, who were willing to buy the smiles of the beautiful Dolora Velasco with hats full of notes is also a matter not to be wondered at.

The young lady, however, kept herself very much aloof, refusing, as a rule, to mix with, or hold any conversation with, strangers not in the profession.

There was one person a constant attendant on this young lady, her most faithful and devoted slave, and himself an actor; his handsome appearance and winning address had enabled him to ingratiate himself with this Southern star. He had been enabled to do her at one time a signal service by introducing her to the manager with whom she now held her most profitable engagement. Whatever faults this young lady or ex-slave-girl might have, ingratitude was not one of them. This actor was by sympathy a red-hot Southerner and upholder of the peculiar institution, slavery; herein he of course differed with the young actress, herself a freed slave.

Not that she showed or felt any bitterness on the subject. Personally, she declared, she had been well treated as a slave; that for herself she had no cause to complain, but though that on principle it was wicked and cruel for any man or woman to hold a fellow creature

in absolute and, if it so pleased him, perpetual bondage.

The name of this actor and devoted admirer of Dolora Velasco was Wilkes Booth, and with the terrible crime which has made the name notorious the actress had, unwittingly, much to do.

The girl's feelings towards him it would be difficult to analyse. He was her most devoted admirer and lover; and yet, though she did not absolutely repulse his advances, it could not be said that she reciprocated the passion he expressed for her. She was grateful to him for past services. Moreover, he was always respectful; and when in addition his handsome form, strong will, and pleasing manners were thrown in the scale, it is not surprising that she should tolerate and even encourage him, not in words, but by tacitly accepting his attentions. Every night at the close of the performance he attended her to her carriage. Every morning he sent round to her hotel a choice bouquet of flowers; and at night he stood watch and ward over her, to protect her alike from annoyance and insult. For this latter service she felt really grateful. Beautiful as a summer night, and an actress, she was considered as a lawful prey by many a wealthy man who thought it merely a matter of price.

Against these the actor Wilkes Booth was a very efficient protection. His fiery temper and violent passions were well known in Washington; and many a man who would have pestered and insulted Dolora by dishonourable proposals, shrank back before the scowling brow and fierce looks of Wilkes Booth.

One evening, in the midst of the performance, the actress suddenly stopped, and after an evident start, gazed hard at one of the stage-boxes.

The voice of the prompter recalled her to her duties; but though she went on with her part, she was evidently distraught all the rest of the night; and again and again her eyes sought the box in question.

It was her wont to hasten home immediately after the conclusion of her performance; not even waiting to

change her dress, but contenting herself with a large cloak, she was forthwith escorted by Mr. Booth to her carriage. That person, though not at the time engaged, had the *entrée* of the theatre, and was well known to all concerned.

On this occasion Mademoiselle Dolora drew him on one side, and proceeded to question him.

"Who was that you had with you in the box to-night?"

"A mulatto, on business."

"From whence does he come?"

"I do not know."

"I have seen him before."

"Possibly."

"Do you know anything of him?"

"I know that he is a member of a certain society or organization, of which I am one also."

"Yes, I know; they call it the order of the Fiery Cross. His name is Hubert Glynne. He knows me and I know him. What is he doing here? If he is recognized, his life is forfeited."

"You know him then?"

"I do; and as he has before now done me a kindness, I would if possible save him from harm. Does he know his danger?"

"He is here on a dangerous errand."

"Its nature?"

"I am not at liberty to tell you."

Said Lola to herself—

"I will know what business in common these two have. Hubert Glynne is desperate and determined. He has not come to Washington for a trifle."

Then to Wilkes Booth—

"If you do not choose to tell me, I cannot help it. But do not come to me again, or speak to me. I wish to know everything about this affair. If you will not tell me, we are no longer friends."

"That must be as you please," he replied, haughtily. "I would do much for you, but I would not betray a solemn trust."

"Good-night."

She left him hurriedly, and accepted the offer of a comparative stranger to escort her to her carriage.

"What can be Hubert Glynne's object in Washington? Disguised—his skin stained too! Some desperate enterprise. I will find it out."

Next night Lola kept a bright look-out on the box where she had seen Hubert Glynne.

Wilkes Booth did not make his appearance at all. Towards the close of the performance, however, Dolora, who was watching intently from behind the scenes, saw a tall cloaked figure enter the box, look round for a moment or two as if in search of some one, and then go out again. She was round at the box-door in less than a minute, but not in time to catch the swarthy cloaked man, whom she had at once recognized as Hubert Glynne. Her hitherto devoted servant and lover did not make his appearance that night.

She began to get uneasy, and even thought of sending round to his hotel.

"He scorns me, despises me, reviles me, doth Hubert Glynne! and yet but for me he would not now have been alive—would have died a disgraceful death in New Orleans. No matter; I will serve him yet. I have a presentiment that he is engaged in some desperate undertaking. Ah, it needs no presentiment to tell me that. Hubert Glynne is not one to come in disguise to the enemy's capital without good reason."

That night she saw nothing of Wilkes Booth.

In the morning though, while she was at breakfast, his card was brought up to her. She ordered him to be admitted; and she triumphed. He was passionately in love with the beautiful Southerner, and revealed the secret of Hubert Glynne's presence in Washington.

Her heart almost stood still as she listened to the audacious avowal of her lover.

Hubert Glynne, Wilkes Booth, and half a dozen others had banded themselves together, and sworn to accomplish their object, or perish.

That object was no other than the forcible abduction of President Lincoln.

"Oh, what madness! what insanity!" she cried. "You will fail miserably, and then there comes the gallows."

"We shall not fail; at all events, not miserably or ridiculously. Our plans are well laid."

"But if you succeed you will fail. Success itself can do you no good. The end is too near. If the President were to disappear to-morrow, it would not prevent the catastrophe. The Confederate army under Lee, despite of all its desperate valour, is exhausted, worn out, and dispirited. Outnumbered five to one, it is only a question of days. Richmond must fall; and its fall will bring submission and peace."

"Richmond may fall," said the other, sternly; "but so shall Abraham Lincoln. You will swear not to betray us?"

"I will not betray you; but I will do my utmost to dissuade you; to save you from yourselves."

"You will waste your time—we are men, not children, and mean to put a stop to this disastrous, and wicked and cruel war."

"But how know you that the course you propose will have that effect, even if you succeed at first?"

"It will have the effect we desire. Abraham Lincoln is the soul of the war; remove him from the scene, and the war will collapse of itself."

"I wish to know all your plans and projects; what you mean to do, and how."

Booth reflected awhile before replying.

"Before I consent to do all that you wish," he said, "I must ask you to promise two things."

"What are they?"

"First, that you will not betray me."

"I have promised, and will swear it if you wish. The other?"

"You know I love you, and I think need not ask what I require."

"I shall never marry," the girl replied, curtly.

"Lola, you are young, beautiful, talented. It is woman's mission and duty to marry. You ask me to do that which almost amounts to treachery——"

"No," she interrupted; "I do not wish to betray you, but to save you."

"Save me! from what?"

"From yourself—from the fatal consequences of this mad and wicked scheme, which will surely follow if you persist in carrying it into effect."

"I cannot withdraw. I have sworn to go on at all risks."

"At all events, you can wait."

"Wait! with Grant thundering at the gates of Richmond? Delay is fatal to our cause, and right well the Yankees know it."

"I wish to see Hubert Glynne, your fellow conspirator."

"You use hard words, young lady."

"If you say you are not a conspirator, I will refrain from calling you so. Say you have relinquished all idea of carrying into effect this mad design, and I will cease calling you a conspirator."

"It would be a one-sided bargain; you ask me to promise that which will make me appear a coward and poltroon. What do you grant in return? As I understand you at present, nothing."

"I claim nothing from you, sir," the girl replied, haughtily. "You come to me, and profess that you wish for my society, friendship—more, even my love. I surely can make my own terms."

"You ask me to forfeit my honour—pledged word."

"I ask you nothing. I simply tell you that I am my own mistress; and that if you do not choose to obey me, you can go elsewhere."

"You demand implicit obedience; but what do you offer in return?"

She knew her power over him, or she would not have replied so boldly.

"I promise nothing; you can remain on the same terms we are on at present, if you please."

"Beautiful tyrant, siren-like you almost tempt me to my own destruction! I will not yield."

"No; you are wrong. I would be not the siren to lead you into danger, but a guide and mentor to save you from the consequences of your own rash folly."

"I dare not betray my friends. Death before dishonour!"

"I do not ask you to betray any one."

"But if I tell you all, and you betray?"

"I shall not do so. You profess to love me, and yet have no faith in my honour."

"Once more I ask what is it you demand, and what is it you offer?"

"I wish you to relinquish all thoughts of this plot."

"I must refuse, mademoiselle," he replied, bowing. "I would sacrifice much for your favour; but not my pledged word."

"Delay, then," she said.

"Delay for what time?"

"Until I have seen Hubert Glynne."

"If I understand you, you know him?"

"Know him? ah, yes, indeed from my childhood upwards I have known him. The disguise he has assumed could not deceive me."

"Lola, you ask me to give you my confidence; to reveal to you that which I have sworn not to do to any man not a member of our society."

"I am a woman."

"Before you can ask me, I am assuredly entitled to demand your confidence."

"Alas! I have little to tell!"

"I know," pursued Booth, "that you are reputed to have been formerly a slave. I know that you came here as a stranger, and, partly through my agency, your beauty and acknowledged talent procured you an engagement at the theatre where now you are the leading star."

"I will grant your request so far as this, that I will not mention names nor places, except in a general way, on the promise that you will inform me of the whole details of this mad plot."

He bowed his head in silent acquiescence, and awaited her.

She hesitated, and seemed inclined to retract her promise.

"Why should I do as the man bids me, and tell him all I know of my past life? And yet that is the only way to gain the information I require. I will save Hubert Glynne and the other fanatics from committing an offence sure to be discovered and frustrated. I will save the head of the State, great and good Abraham Lincoln, from an outrage which in the heat of passion might prove fatal; and by so doing I will save both North and South from further misery and the horrors of prolonged war. The struggle is fast drawing to a close. By sheer superiority of numbers and resources the North is slowly but surely beating down the desperate resistance of the gallant Confederates. If, now that further resistance is all but hopeless, they can be brought to see it and submit to their fate, peace can be made and the Union restored. If, however, this thing be done, it will set all Yankeeland ablaze with fury, and a war of extermination will be waged on the unhappy vanquished. Yes, for all these reasons, I will gain my point."

These thoughts flashed through the mind of Lola, the actress, in much less time than it has taken to write them down. Having decided, she commenced to speak as follows in our next chapter.

CHAPTER XXXVI.**LOLA RECOUNTS HER HISTORY.**

"MANY years ago, I was brought to Louisiana as a slave child. I have dim memories which tell me that I was not always in that unhappy position. I know not whence I came nor who brought me to that part of the country, where I have spent some fourteen years of my life. I do not even know my age, though I suppose that I am about twenty. During the greater part of that fourteen years, I and my brother were owned by a rich Louisiana planter, by whom we were brought up. I was kindly treated by the family, and in time became greatly attached to them, especially the young lady, my owner's only daughter, to whom I was appointed as companion and attendant. But for the galling consciousness that I was a slave, to be bought and sold at pleasure, I should have been quite happy and contented with my lot. My brother, however, was differently situated. His violent temper caused him to be expelled from the house and set to work as a field-hand. This infuriated him greatly, and his conduct was such as frequently to bring punishment on him. He was insolent too, and even threatened to strike our master's eldest son, against whom nothing could be alleged except that he was rash and impetuous. This offence brought increased severity on my unhappy brother. Just as he attained manhood this dreadful war broke forth, and from that moment he commenced to plot, and fondly

hoped to gain his freedom by force. There were many Yankee emissaries and traitors about, and nothing was spared to aid the war in the field by a rebellion among the slaves of the Confederates, the majority of whom were away fighting the Northern armies.

"All these attempts had but partial success for a long time ; but at last an evil spirit seemed to possess the slaves round our plantation, and I saw that they would soon be ripe for a rising. There were many negroes in the neighbourhood admirably adapted to stir up the passions of their fellow bondsmen and lead them to rebellion. I who knew them felt sure that any such attempt would fail utterly in the long run. But I knew also that a sudden surprise would cause the massacre of the whites in some plantations, where, through a fancied security and that contempt for danger which characterizes the Southerners, no precautions were taken. The bloodshed and outrage which would follow a rising of the slaves would, I knew, be fearfully avenged by the whites when they recovered from the first surprise and brought all their energies to bear on their domestic enemies. I felt convinced that no result would follow ; but, in the first place, the massacre of a few families on lonely plantations, and afterwards the death of hundreds of the rioters by the cord and bullet and sword at the hands of the exasperated whites. What, then, was my horror when I saw a desperate conspiracy spreading all around, and knew that its object was a sudden rising, and as a beginning the massacre of all the whites on our own and neighbouring plantations. No thought of danger disturbed the minds of our young master and mistress. There were three brothers left joint owners of the estate by their father at the time of which I speak. The eldest brother alone was at home with my mistress, the sister. The leaders of this projected rising and massacre, amongst whom was my brother Sebastian, hurried on their preparations. Runners were sent to all the district around, and to my horror I learned one morning that that very night was fixed for the attempt I was

determined to prevent, both for the sake of the unhappy insurgents and our master and mistress, to whom, in spite of the thralldom in which I was held, I was sincerely attached. I vainly attempted to influence my brother. Determined to prevent the threatened horrors of the night, I possessed myself of full particulars of the plans of the insurgents. It was arranged that at midnight a beacon-light should be exhibited on the top of an eminence at some distance, known as Gum-tree Hill. To this the conspirators were to repair in all haste, armed and ready for action. When a large number had been collected, they were to march through the country, burning, destroying, and murdering, and incite all the other slaves to join them. Those who did not do so were to be themselves slaughtered. Our plantation was especially marked out as the first to be visited with pillage and bloodshed. There was among the field-hands a demon in human shape, who bore our master the most violent animosity, and swore that he and all his should be murdered. That he was capable of keeping his word I well knew, and shuddered with terror at the thought. I resolved to convey a warning to the unsuspecting whites, who had no idea of the terrible danger they were in.

"As it happened, there was that day a large number of gentlemen from the neighbouring plantations and New Orleans, and at Valverde."

At mention of the word Valverde, Wilkes Booth started a little, and looked surprised. The girl, however, did not notice it, but went on with her narrative.

"They were all mounted, and mostly armed; those who were not were supplied from our master's store.

"At first my warning was received with incredulity; but when, as I had predicted, the beacon light was seen on the hills, then they awakened to a sense of their danger.

"It was mount and away! The whites were armed and in the saddle in ten minutes. Like a thunderbolt they burst on the affrighted slaves at the rendezvous,

who were cursing, shouting, and yelling, working themselves up to a pitch of fury before commencing the work of slaughter.

"They made short work of them ; many were killed, hundreds wounded, and all dispersed and utterly discomfited. The explosion of a barrel of gunpowder completed the confusion and panic. Then there commenced a hot pursuit, and for a long time the poor wretches were hunted singly through the forest, and mercilessly cut down by the now furious whites. A great number took refuge in the swamps. Some were made prisoners, more wounded, and more still killed outright.

"After the pursuit and slaughter of these misguided men had well-nigh ceased, our master was riding leisurely homewards. Suddenly a shot was fired at him by a would-be assassin who lay in ambush. I saw the attempt, and by myself firing at the concealed foe, who was taking a most deadly aim at the unsuspecting horseman, caused the bullet meant for his heart to go astray.

"That shot of mine saved his life ; but in doing so I wounded my own brother, for I recognised him the next moment, as with a cry of pain he started off and ran away. That was once I saved my master's life. About the same time a horrible crime was attempted at the house itself. My gentle mistress, Miss Maude, was found with a knife buried up to the hilt in her breast. It was my brother's knife. He was seized and accused of the crime. A variety of circumstances seemed to point him out as the murderer. But I knew he could not have done this ; for when I, to save my master's life, shot at and wounded him, he was far away from the plantation house. My master rode home straight and fast, and when he arrived the deed was done. I was enabled to prove this to the satisfaction of every one, and he was set free. At the same time I denounced as the attempted murderer the same cruel and crafty slave I have before spoken of. They called him the Hyena, and his nature well corresponded with that of that leathsome

wild beast. Previously I had enraged him, and after this he was my most bitter enemy.

"Shortly afterwards our young master started for the seat of war in Tennessee with my young mistress, who rapidly recovered from her wound; and I went to reside in the city of New Orleans. The plantation house was left to the care of a few old servants, as my master did not choose to leave her exposed to other dangers in his absence.

"And now I come to the second part of my story."

"Although you have not told me," Wilkes Booth said, "the name of your master I know. His name is Hubert Glynne."

The girl coloured slightly, but replied with unfaltering voice—

"You have guessed rightly. For myself I have nothing to conceal, but did not feel justified in speaking of him without his consent. He was always kind and generous to me, and he can for ever claim the gratitude of Dolora Velasco, one time his slave."

Booth looked hard at her, as though wishing to read her heart.

But she bore his gaze unflinchingly, and a momentary suspicion which came into his mind was dissipated; for not only did she reply firmly and without hesitation, but there was no sign of any embarrassment whatever.

"You have heard so much of my story; do you wish for more?"

"I wish to hear all you have to tell."

"You shall do so. I have now other characters to introduce on the scene; one is a man named Varley Fang, a treacherous scoundrel; another, an overseer on his estate; and yet another who did me good service—an Englishman. This man Fang pretended to be on the Confederate side, but was a rank traitor and scoundrel. He joined this very society of which you are a member, called the '**Fiery Cross**,' only to betray the secrets thereof. He had before annoyed me by his hateful attentions and proposals. I had scorned and insulted

him as he deserved. But for fear of this man my life would have been a happy one. I was no longer a slave, but the companion and friend of my late mistress, Maude Glynne.

"The manumission papers which should make me legally and for ever free were in course of preparation. Meanwhile, I was treated with the utmost consideration by everybody. I accompanied Miss Glynne everywhere, and was in all respects considered an equal. In New Orleans few knew I had been a slave. I was admitted into society, and amidst the pleasures of the present almost forgot the sorrows and humiliations of the past. I forgot too, or neglected to pay due heed to, a warning I had received, to the effect that this man Fang was ceaselessly plotting against me, and meant, if he could succeed in no other way, to gain possession of me by force. For a time I was cautious, but at last was thrown off my guard. A message was sent me while at a ball, that Miss Glynne had gone home ill and wished me to follow her instantly. I hastened away, was induced to enter a brougham which was at the door, and was driven rapidly away. When I awoke to a sense of my true position, I found that we were in the suburbs of the city. The carriage suddenly stopped, and a man entered, and before I could resist effectually, I was seized, gagged, and bound. Then they drove off into the open country. They quarrelled for me. I was bound to a tree while they gambled for me in a deserted hut. These two men were the overseer of Varley Fang and the Hyena. They had been employed by Fang to carry me off to his country house. By good fortune I escaped these ruffians. The man called Hyena Jones murdered the other. In the meantime I managed to free myself from the cords by which I was tied to a tree, and running as though for dear life gained the carriage in which they had brought me there ; mounting the box, I drove off, pursued by my relentless enemy. Though he shot the horse and caused the carriage to overturn, I yet managed to escape from him. My misfortunes were not yet, however, over, or

nearly so. I knew not whither I was going, but hurried on at my utmost speed, thinking only of escaping from my ruffianly pursuer. At last I saw a light; reached a house, knocked and was admitted. Then I found myself in the presence of the master villain—Varley Fang himself. My position was now forlorn indeed. I was kept a prisoner in a small room without a window. A noxious drug was administered to me, and altogether it seemed that I was entirely and hopelessly at this man's mercy. But fortune and kind friends again befriended me. The house was surrounded by friends of Maude Glynne, at the head of whom was this Englishman, Captain George. Through him it was that I was discovered and restored to liberty. He remained behind after the first vain search of the house; and when all others had left, having concealed himself, he came forth at the proper time, and following my enemy, who came straight to where I was lying half unconscious; he rescued me. Varley Fang for the time escaped, but the house was set fire to and utterly destroyed.

"For a time all went well, but shortly afterwards came that great disaster to the Confederate cause, the capture of New Orleans. Varley Fang returned in triumph, and the Southern ladies who remained had a hard time of it under the rule of General Butler. Before the surrender of the town, however, my unfortunate brother again got into trouble, and was betrayed by Fang into compromising himself, and condemned to be hanged. The sentence was about to be carried out, the rope even round his neck, when Hubert Glynne appeared, and by his interference procured a respite of the sentence after arranging for my brother's escape.

"He was wounded and feverish, and shortly became delirious. He rode away from the city, and did not return for days afterwards, when the Federals were in possession. Still under the influence of the burning fever, he knew not of the change which had taken place, and hurled down and trampled upon a Yankee flag. He was seized, tried, and condemned to be hanged. We

made every effort—I and Maude Glynne and others—to procure a commutation of the sentence. Butler and Fang both averred that they could and would save him; but made the most disgraceful proposals one of which was that Maude Glynne should sell or give me to the Governor of New Orleans. Slavery was not yet abolished by the President's proclamation, and there had been delay in the preparation of the papers which should have made me free. Legally, then, I was still a slave, the property of Maude Glynne, to whom her brother had at her request transferred me. Hubert Glynne wholly refused to consent to this arrangement, even at the price of his liberty. I procured permission for a last interview with him on the very eve of the day he was to be executed. We had arranged a plan for his escape, which we hoped might succeed, but all our hopes were dashed by a change of the troops guarding the prison where he was confined, and then there suddenly entered his cell Varley Fang, to taunt him and gloat over his fate. A moment before, Hubert Glynne had told me that he had arranged with the sentry to shoot him at the last stroke of twelve.

“That sentry was my brother Sebastian. Once had Hubert Glynne spared his life, and once had he saved it. He was not ungrateful, and promised to comply with the last request his late master would ever make. He was now a soldier in a Federal regiment, and had orders to shoot any prisoner who should attempt to escape. Hubert Glynne, having got him to promise, arranged a plan so that at the last he might be spared the ignominy of a death by hanging. As the clock struck twelve he would appear at the window, light in hand; at the last stroke the sentry would fire and shoot him through the heart; this was the plan. But on the entrance of Varley Fang a sudden thought flashed across my mind; it seemed like an inspiration; I felt that I was destined once again to save Hubert Glynne. It was close on the stroke of twelve; at the first chime I commenced taunting Varley Fang; told him that the prisoner would escape in spite

of him; that the prison bars were filed, and the guards won over to our side. At mention of the bars being filed through, he seized the lantern, and rushing to the window commenced shaking them; as he did so the clock struck twelve. With the last stroke Sebastian Velasco fired, and at the same time avenged the attempted outrage on his sister, and provided a means for the escape of the prisoner. Putting on the hat and cloak of Fang, now lying bleeding on the floor, and also taking the keys, he was enabled to pass out unchallenged. Horses, and many friends who hoped for his deliverance by the other plan, were in waiting, and in less than a quarter of an hour all were safely outside the city. A sharp ride brought the fugitives to the banks of Lake Ponchartrain, where a steamer, which was then and there christened the Fiery Cross, was awaiting them. She was armed and manned, and taking on board Hubert Glynne and his friends, prepared to go to sea. This was not, however, to be accomplished without a fight. Federal troops endeavoured to intercept her by means of shore batteries, but after a desperate conflict the vessel succeeded in passing out. Since then I had not seen or heard of Hubert Glynne, until the other night I saw and recognised him in a private box with you.

"Here ends the second part of my story; shall I continue and bring it down to the present time?"

"I am deeply interested, and beg that you will do so," Booth replied.

"My dear friend and late mistress, Miss Maude Glynne, was doomed to suffer for the escape of her brother. She was accused of complicity in that escape, and also of having treasonable assemblies at her house. The Yankee governor was brutal and cruel enough to send her to prison; it broke her gentle heart, and after a short illness she died; then I felt alone in the world. Before her death her confinement was relaxed, and I was permitted to see her. She gave me all her trinkets and all the ready money she had—not much, Heaven knows, poor girl! Her last words were of her brother Hubert.

She gave me messages for him, and adjured me, if ever it lay in my power, to serve him for her sake. The messages I have not yet been able to deliver him, nor hand him his sister's dying gift. But I will do so, and also prevail on him to relinquish the mad project, and make the best of his way from this most dangerous neighbourhood."

"You will fail," said Booth, laconically.

"I will not fail. He shall not again peril his life to no purpose. But to resume and conclude: New Orleans and its associations were hateful to me; besides, one of my enemies, the noted Hyena Jones, still lived and I was in constant terror of him. So I arranged to accompany a Federal officer and his wife who were coming to Washington. Arrived here, I cast about me as to how I should earn an honourable living, and at last resolved to try to become an actress. Thanks to Miss Maude I had received a tolerable education. I was told I had a good address and appearance. So I got patronage and called on the manager of the theatre. There I saw you, who were kind enough to encourage me, and assist me by advice; I am not, I assure you, ungrateful, and hope some day to repay you for your kindness. And that is all I have to say."

CHAPTER XXXVII.

A DARING PLOT.

"AND now," Lola said, "tell me where I can and when I can see Hubert Glynne; and also, according to promise, reveal to me all you know of this plot."

"As to Hubert Glynne, I will see him presently and inform him of your wish. Doubtless he will make an appointment. Now then, as to our plot: once again, though, I must remind you of your promise not to betray us."

"I have not forgotten and shall not forget."

"Even now, at the last moment my heart misgives me, and I feel I am doing wrong. It is you, beautiful siren, who tempt me to my destruction."

"Heaven forbid!" she exclaimed, fervently. "I would save you from harm—would do all in my power to aid you, were you engaged in a less terrible and destructive enterprise. You have been a good friend to me."

"I hope to be something nearer and dearer than a friend," he said, in such a significant manner as to bring the colour to her cheek.

"Pray go on. Do not talk nonsense now."

"I am about to intrust you with knowledge possessed by only half a score of people in the world, and with the exception of those, you are the only one to whom I would say what I am about to. So judge by that, Lola, the power you wield over me."

"I thank heaven for it," she said to herself; "would that I had the same influence over Hubert Glynnel!"

"You know already that we mean to make a prisoner of the President, but I have not told you how we shall do it, nor what we shall do with him when captured. In the first place, we have agents, spies, call them what you will, at the White House, the President's residence; these people have him under constant surveillance, and are always about his person."

"Who are they?"

"It is not necessary to mention the names; let it suffice that they are the acutest and most secret and best observers; in short, women——"

"Women!" echoed Lola. "Ah! poor Abe Lincoln, you are indeed to be pitied. A man-spy may be suspected and exposed; a woman is too subtle and discreet. I have often noted that women are best for intently observing, for quick perception; men for plot and action."

"You are right. I, too, was aware of this; therefore, after infinite trouble I got hold of some of the girl 'helps,' and one in a higher grade."

"How did you do it?"

"Made love to them. I am notorious as a lady-killer."

There was something very offensive to her pride of sex in this speech, and she expressed her indignation.

"So, by pretending affection you did not feel, you beguiled these girls to deceive and play the spy on their master. Shame on your manhood, Wilkes Booth!"

Her eyes flashed indignantly, and a scornful expression came on her beautiful face.

But Booth was ready with an answer.

"If they loved me and agreed to betray their master for the sake of that love, it is but the same part I am acting towards my comrade for love of you, Lola."

Lola now coloured with confusion. There seemed some show of reason in his words. He loved her passionately, this wild dissipated actor; and she, trading on

his love, was eliciting from him his secrets. Was she not as guilty as the poor girls who, won over by his soft speeches and handsome person, consented to do his bidding?

Did she love this man, she asked herself. And her heart answered, No.

"But then," said Lola, "it is in a good cause."

So consoling herself with this, she said nothing, but requested him to go on.

"From these spies of mine I am informed of all the President's movements. I could with the greatest ease have him prisoner at any time. Such is not my wish. I have other views. The President is utterly unsuspecting, and by nature fearless. He often goes out alone, and sometimes walks over the bridge across the Potomac leading to Alexandria. One of these occasions will be our opportunity. We are kept informed every time he goes out, and have plenty to watch him and dog his footsteps when he is abroad. There passes not a week without an opportunity. Sometimes two or three days consecutively he is in your power, you ask, why then do we wait? I will tell you. We can capture him now or at any time, but we must have made all arrangements for disposing of him before we strike the blow. A few miles down the Potomac there lies a little yacht belonging to a member of Congress. He is an ardent supporter of the President, and dreams not that he has loaned his yacht for two months, at the price of two hundred dollars in gold, purposely to carry him off when we have captured him. The yacht, however, is not sufficient. She is not large enough to go to sea. For that a steamer is requisite—a swift and armed steamer. Now this steamer would have to lay at the mouth of the Chesapeake, where the yacht with her valuable prize could come down to her and transfer Lincoln on board. But it would be impossible for a Confederate vessel to lay there. As a consequence artifice must be brought to bear. Preparations are now being made. Shortly, a peaceable merchantman will lie there, disabled by an injury to her hull, and dismasted.

Her papers will be open for inspection, and her captain will report that she sustained the injury by collision. She will be supposed to be there in order to repair damages; but in real truth the damage to her hull will be all a sham. Some outer planks have been purposely cut about, and the pumps are kept working constantly to pump out water which is purposely admitted into her hold.

"As for her papers, they are true ones, but have been captured by a rebel war-vessel, in an enemy's ship, which has been burned, and which she has been painted to resemble. Then about the fact of her being dismasted, that is to say, partially so, having lost her maintopmast and fore-top-gallant-mast and jibboom, the masts and yards are already down, and to all appearance she is in a bad plight, but in reality, other spars are all in readiness, and can be sent aloft in the course of an hour. But more than this: at a pinch she can do without masts, yards, or sails; for she is in reality a steamer with powerful engines, and coal enough beneath the peaceful-looking cargo to last for a week's cruise. She is, moreover, a war-vessel powerfully armed, her armament for the present dismounted and concealed; only about a dozen men too are to be seen on her decks. Really, she has a crew of nearly a hundred picked men. Her funnel is unshipped and concealed also; but it can be reshipped; her screw-propeller lowered, and steam got up in an hour; for by a peculiar arrangement the water in the boilers is kept hot without any considerable smoke being apparent. Thus you see there is, or will be, at the mouth of the Chesapeake a swift and formidable war-vessel, ready to receive and put out at sea immediately with his Excellency President Abraham Lincoln."

"I understand all this. Now for your plan of operations."

"Simple enough, in all conscience," replied Wilkes Booth, "and sure to succeed. There is one other thing I have omitted to mention; that is a small brougham with just room for four persons inside, and drawn by a fast-

trotting horse. This broughan has iron shutters, which close upwards by means of a spring ; it has been built for the occasion. Now for our plan of operations. So soon as the rebel steamer shall have arrived off the bay, everything will be in readiness : on a certain day a signal will be made to one of our watchmen from a window of the White House ; that signal will mean the President is going out alone to walk—probably over the bridge across the Potomac. You see honest old Abe has a friend there, with whom he loves to talk over old times, when they were both splitting rails out west. Ah ! it would have been a good thing both for the country and Abe if he had stopped there. What bloodshed and misery might have been spared ! But that is all passed. To resume my story. If he goes on to the bridge, he will be followed by the closed carriage. There will be four persons inside—desperate and determined men. When about half-way across the bridge, and choosing a time when no other passengers are near, the carriage will drive swiftly up to the President ; the doors will be thrown open ; four men will leap forth ; Lincoln will be instantaneously seized, gagged by means of a pitch-plaster, and forced to enter ; three of the men will enter with him ; the fourth will mount the box ; the door will close ; the iron shutters fly up ; and at full gallop on it will go, nor stop till it arrives at a little creek four miles down the Potomac, on the Alexandria side. His Excellency will then be politely requested to go quietly on board the yacht I have before spoken of, and will be warned to struggle or make an attempt at outcry at his peril.”

“He is a brave and powerful man. Suppose he should not heed your threats ?”

“Then his blood be on his own head,” said Wilkes Booth, solemnly.

Lola shuddered at his tone and look.

“This man,” she thought to herself, “is indeed desperate character. He will do, or attempt to do, anything he undertakes.”

He continued—

"Once on board the yacht, all the rest will be easy. She will make the best of her way down the Potomac, and put the distinguished prisoner on board the disguised Confederate vessel; then she will up anchor and make sail; and so soon as it is dusk, get up all steam and be off to sea, with the President of the United States a prisoner on board."

"And whither will she go, this vessel, if your scheme is so far successful?"

"I do not know exactly. Some island in the Atlantic. No one knows except the captain of the *Black Angel*."

"The *Black Angel*! I have heard of her; but she was destroyed years ago."

"Did I say the *Black Angel*? I did not mean to do so," said Booth in some confusion.

"Ah, I perceive! there is then another vessel named after that celebrated one. Who is the captain of the new one?"

He was on the eve of answering, but suddenly checked himself. There was something in her manner which caused him to do so.

"I cannot tell you," he replied, coldly. "Already I have said too much."

"I did not ask for half-confidence," she said, sharply.

"Half-confidence, indeed! You have no right to reproach me with that. I have given you full details of our plan. I shall certainly not go farther, and compromise any one by mentioning names. Remember, that in your narrative to me you observed the same precaution; and it was only by the accidental mention of the Valverde estate I knew that Hubert Glyune once owned you."

There was some truth in this, and Lola felt its force.

"At all events, tell me the supposed name of the rebel, which, under pretence of being a disabled merchantman, will lie in wait at the mouth of the Chesapeake."

"I cannot tell you—there is no necessity for it."

"I am willing to accept this compromise," she said.

"You refuse to tell me the name of the captain of the Black Angel ; let me know her assumed name."

"I cannot."

She rose and confronted him, pale and determined. Her dark eyes flashed full on his face, and caused him to feel a thrill as of electricity throughout his frame.

"Very well then, Mr. Booth ; we are no longer friends. I wish you a very good day. I shall retire. You can go when you please ; but when you do, I will thank you not to return. If you do it will be useless. I shall leave directions at the clerk's office of the hotel that I do not wish to receive you."

He too rose and stood before her—pale and, what was not usual with him, irresolute.

"Lola," he said, in a low tone, "will nothing else content you ?"

"When I demand anything, nothing but that which I demand can content me," she replied, haughtily.

A struggle went on in his mind—a fierce struggle.

"I will rebel against this tyranny—resist the terrible influence she wields over me. Samson was betrayed by a woman ; I will not be so——"

"Wilkes Booth," she said, "I await your answer."

Her voice was soft and plaintive now, and her eyes were now dove-like, her face winning, almost pleading in expression.

He trembled, his heart failed him. He could not resist the fascinations of this dangerous beauty. Down on one knee he fell, and took her hand.

"Lola, dear Lola, I cannot fight against you ; you have conquered. Give me but the slightest token of regard for me in return, and I will yield what you wish."

"What do you ask ?" she inquired.

He rose, and drew her towards him.

"A kiss—just one kiss, Lola."

Instinctively she shrank back—instinctively.

"Just one," he pleaded ; "and own that you love me a little."

"I cannot," she said.

"Say that you like me then, and may some day love me."

"I cannot answer for the future," she said, *evasively*.

"At least one kiss?"

Her innate modesty impelled her to refuse. The magnitude of the interests at stake, and a certain feeling of pity for this man who was so abjectly her slave, whom she so completely bent to her purpose—wound round her finger, as it were—urged her to grant him this little boon.

She did not reply in words; but he saw by her face that he might dare—and he dared.

Dared much more than he at first asked, or she meant to grant. For he caught her in his arms, and straining her passionately to him, kissed her again and again—cheeks, brow, and lips.

She struggled in his fierce embrace, and with difficulty freed herself.

"Sir, sir, for shame!" she cried, crimson with shame.

"Pardon, dearest Lola; my heart has overpowered me."

"The name of the vessel?"

"The *Prairie Flower*, of Boston."

Then trembling and blushing she hurried away, strange emotions filling her breast.

In the solitude of her chamber she held commune with herself.

"Oh this man, this terrible Booth! Will no one save me from him? In some respects he is my slave; in others I dread him. By slight concessions and promises I can win anything from him; but my heart smites me. Even now those kisses I half permitted him to snatch seem Judas-like, for I do not love him. Ah me! where is Hubert Glynne? I have saved him more than once; but he will not put forth a hand to help or save me."

Wilkes Booth left the apartments of Dolora Velasco with feelings of exultation, satisfaction, and misgiving, all mingled.

"I would sell myself for that girl!" he muttered, as he strode rapidly down Pennsylvania Avenue. "Paradise without her would be of no value in my eyes: but, have I not also sold my comrades? No, no," he reasoned, "I cannot believe her false. She will never betray me. I will win her for my own after we have carried out our grand design."

Certainly he was perfectly infatuated with this ex-slave girl.

And what became of his infatuation will be related in the succeeding chapters.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

WOMAN'S LOVE.

LOLA, though she had obtained possession of a great deal of information, was at a loss how to make it serve her purpose. That purpose was, in the first place, to prevent the abduction of the President. Although when herself a slave she had been well and kindly treated, she did not fail to feel deep sympathy with the unfortunates who shared her bondage without the softening influences by which she was surrounded; herself having writhed under the yoke, even in the most favourable possible circumstances, she could appreciate the hardships and miseries to which others were exposed.

The one thing which galled her, and excited her bitterest animosity against the institution, was the power, absolute power, masters had over their slaves; in the case of women slaves this was peculiarly atrocious and cruel. An owner could take a child from its mother's breast and sell it away; and worse, if possible, than this, had absolute power over his female slaves, their lives, their persons.

A slave girl, unless under a good master, could not be chaste and virtuous.

It was an utter impossibility. Neither law nor custom recognised such a thing.

A knowledge of this terrible right, albeit in her case never exercised, was a constant source of irritation and anger with Delora Velasco. It was when the thought presented itself to her, in the days of her serfdom, that

she might by accident or design be handed over to the ownership of a master neither so just nor generous as Hubert Glynne, that her cheeks flushed, her eyes gleamed, and she clenched her teeth in intense rage.

She did not forget that she had not been exposed to insult and outrage, but she remembered that there were thousands of unhappy girls in her position absolutely at the mercy of any ruffian who fancied them and could bid high enough.

So Lola was a bitter opponent of this system under which she herself had suffered in person and witnessed much more suffering in the case of others. As a consequence, she felt sincerely grateful to Abraham Lincoln, who since his Emancipation Proclamation she looked upon as the Apostle of freedom. She did not stay to think about his reason for so doing, nor did she call to mind the fact that it was not to benefit the slaves, but to injure the enemies of the North that he so acted. He had by a few words proclaimed that slavery was for ever abolished on the North American continent. As a consequence he should claim the gratitude and admiration of every freed slave, as of all those who sympathized with their unhappy lot. Lola was impassioned and generous, and thus regarding the President, she determined that he should not be subject to outrage and possible death if she could prevent it.

There were yet other reasons why she resolved to prevent the attempt if possible.

Hubert Glynne was mixed up in it. She felt assured that the conspirators would fail if ever they put their plans in force, and therefore, wishing at least two of them well, she thought she would befriend them in spite of themselves. She felt a certain stern pleasure in serving Hubert Glynne. Twice already she had saved his life. He had wronged her; not in so many words, but by his actions and manner.

It was as though he said—

“You are a very handsome girl, and I’m much obliged to you. I might honour you by thinking you worthy of

my serious attention ; but you are a slave, or have been, so it is out of the question."

Once more she would render him a signal service, even though he might never acknowledge the obligation.

Last of all she believed that even if the President could be captured it would only make matters worse for the South, incense the Federals against them, and convert an already sufficiently cruel struggle into a war of extermination.

But how to accomplish her purpose?

She could not, would not betray them. That was the last thing she thought of.

She had some influence over Wilkes Booth ; through him, then, she would endeavour to gain her end, but at present she was quite unable to say how, or in what manner.

Already she had obtained full information of the plans of the conspirators from him : how to bend that knowledge to her purpose?

That was the question.

She remained for a long time in deep thought, and gradually various plans unfolded themselves to her mind—not clearly but vaguely.

She was aroused from her deep study by a messenger from the theatre, to say that she would shortly be required for a rehearsal.

Hastily dressing herself she went out, and careless of the glances of admiration, and remarks more flattering to her beauty than respectful, she was making the best of her way to the scene of her labours and triumphs, when she was suddenly brought to a full stop.

Suddenly turning a corner, she found herself face to face with Hubert Glynne. He started, and coloured up, but showed no wish to avoid her. Indeed, it would have been impossible under the circumstances, they were so close.

He was strangely attired in a theatrical ostentatious manner, such as is greatly affected by mulattoes. A

large cloak draped his tall figure, he wore a Kossuth hat with feather, and Hessian boots with scarlet tops. His complexion was dark enough for a light negro, and of course she at once saw that he had dyed himself as a disguise.

She drew on one side and curtsied humbly, as in the olden days when he was her lord and master.

"Nay, nay, Lola," he said, "why this humility? It is I should step aside before you, and bow lowly; the poor soldier before the brilliant and successful actress—the saved before his saviour."

"Do you fancy I have forgotten, can ever forget, that you saved my life? Colonel Glynne, I said nothing of the kind. I saw you and recognised you the other night at the theatre; you certainly went away suddenly, as though I had frightened you."

"You frighten me now, Lola," he said, glancing hurriedly around him. "For heaven's sake! do not call me by my name here. Do you not know that I am here on an affair of the utmost importance—in the enemy's camp, as it were,—and that if recognised I should be hung in half an hour? You have saved my life twice, Lola; it is hardly probable you would be able to do so a third time."

"I mean to do so."

"I scarcely understand you."

"I mean to save your life a third time, by preventing your going on with this desperate enterprise."

"Ha! you know then?"

"I know a great deal."

"What do you know?"

"That you are here in disguise, in imminent peril of your life, to effect that which is all but an impossibility, and which, if it succeeded, would have an effect very different from that which you wish."

"How much do you know, Lola?" he asked in great surprise.

"That you intend to make the President captive, and carry him away."

"Ha! and you would betray us?"

She looked him in the face, a look full of sorrow and tenderness and reproach.

"I betray you! Ah! that you should think so. would rather be torn in pieces by wild horses."

Her eyes filled with tears, and Hubert Glynne's heart smote him.

"Pardon me, my dear girl, I did not think—you startled me so for the moment by the extent of your knowledge. I have good reason to know that you would be the last to do aught of the kind."

He took her hand, and pressing it warmly, endeavoured in every way to heal the wound his thoughtless words had made.

"Come, Lola, do not be angry with me. I declare you are growing more beautiful every day."

He went on soothing her as best he could, which was not a hard task.

His words, admiring glances, and the pressure of his hand, caused her heart to thrill with joy. She loved him, and could not disguise it from herself, or stifle the feeling, hopeless as she thought it.

No, not even his scorn could turn her heart against him. He was her hero, and had been from her girlhood, when, as a little waiting-maid on Miss Maude, she used to look with awe and admiration on her handsome young master.

He walked on with her, seeking a sequestered walk where they could converse without attracting so much attention as they did in the crowded streets, being anxious to avoid notice.

She pleaded long and earnestly, but in vain. Her object was to dissuade him from persevering in this enterprise.

She urged the improbability of success, the danger, the uncertainty that it would effect any good.

All in vain. It was as rain beating against a rock.

"It is quite useless, Lola. I honour you, and am deeply

grateful for the interest you have taken in my welfare. Dear girl, since the death of poor Maude, yours is the only woman's voice that has fallen on my ear with sweet sounds of sympathy. I have a duty to perform, a solemn duty, to my poor bleeding country, now waging a desperate and unequal contest against the cruel invader. As for personal danger I care nothing ; I will carry through this, though I myself am certain to fall. If I am to die by the hangman's hand, then the will of Heaven be done ! ”

So with a sad heart and tearful eyes, Lola prepared to bid him adieu.

“At least, promise me one thing,” she said, ere they parted.

“What is it ? ”

“That if you receive a warning from me, you will take heed of it. Remember, that when I warned you before, it was with reason.”

“Yes, on the occasion when the Fiery Cross on the hill was to be a signal for a slave revolt. I have not forgotten, Lola, believe me. I will promise what you wish. If I receive a warning from you, I will pay attention to it.”

Then they parted after a long lingering look on either side as they stood hand in hand.

“It is a pity there ever was such an institution as slavery,” he said to himself with a sigh as he walked slowly away. “Had there not been, this dreadful war-so disastrous to my country, would never have been waged. For though the true motive might have remained, the excuse would have been wanting to the Yankees. And then, too, Lola, beautiful Lola, would not have been a slave, would have been my equal, and then —ah, well, it's no use thinking.”

CHAPTER XXXIX.

AN INTERVIEW WITH THE PRESIDENT.

TIME passed on, Grant still beleaguering Richmond, drawing his lines closer and closer around the doomed city with iron tenacity. What cared he for the slaughter of his troops in thousands by the artillery fire and the desperate attempts of the gallant defenders to burst through his lines ?

As his men fell, he quietly replaced them by others, and kept steadily on. A constant stream of fresh troops poured into his camp, and still his remorseless cry was for "more men." They were sent in compliance with his demand, many of them to fall by Confederate bullets. But the defenders of Richmond and Petersburg had no such means of recruiting their rapidly failing forces. When gaps were made in their regiments they were not filled up by fresh men ; the others closed in.

And so the fight went on : Lee and his troops, ragged, half-starved, and as one to five, battling with splendid valour to the last.

Then came Sherman's march through Georgia, carrying fire and desolation through the State.

The far-seeing ones saw that the end was nigh. Nothing but foreign aid could enable the exhausted Southerners to withstand the Northern hordes ; and, alas ! for the former, all the world stood by and witnessed the sight of a brave nation struggling for bare existence trampled in the dust.

Some day, perhaps, a Nemesis may arise, and those who saw this terrible war waged without a word in favour of the weaker, may themselves be engaged in a desperate struggle for life and death. Then when they turn, faint and exhausted for aid, just a little aid, they may be met with a cold refusal, accompanied by the hollow form, "non-intervention," which is interpreted by English statesmen of the present day thus. Never interfere against a strong power in favour of a weaker one. In fact, never fight an equal at all; but with weak powers, intervene and interfere whenever there is profit to be made.

However, to resume: we now approach the last days of the Confederacy.

Shortly the white flag with the starry blue cross, a flag which has been borne in dozens of pitched battles to glorious victory, will be for ever hauled down and trampled in the dust.

.

Abraham Lincoln was surrounded by no state ceremonial. Any person who had business with him could see him daily at the White House, of course between stated hours. Necessarily, he could devote but a very short time to each member of the crowd continually thronging the rooms.

Early in the forenoon a young lady, elegantly attired, made her way to him.

"Sir," she said at once, "I wish to speak to you."

He nodded his head and smiled kindly, as though to say, "Go ahead, my dear."

Glancing around at the crowd, she added,

"It must be privately."

"Can't be did, young lady; too busy for petitions now. Got to shake hands with all these good people. Wish one of 'em was President, or my arm was cast-iron."

"It is on important business."

"H'm! reckon everybody's business is tolerable important to themselves."

"This is important to the State, to every one, to yourself in particular."

"What's its nature?" he asked, with more attention.

"A plot."

"I've heard a good deal of plots lately, and they've mostly turned out bunkum."

"This is not one of that sort. Believe me, President, when I tell you that to-morrow, ay, this afternoon, may be too late."

He regarded her keenly for a moment or two, and saw that she was in earnest.

"See you in half an hour. Wait in the hall."

Then he went on shaking hands, listening to what the ever-increasing crowd had to say, he himself having a pleasant word with each. Suddenly, with an awkward bow, and a brief, "'Xcuse me, ladies and gentlemen," he vanished.

"Now, young lady," he said to the visitor who insisted on seeing him in private; "my time's short. Who are you?"

"My name is Dolora Velasco. I am now an actress at Ford's Theatre. I was a slave; and such being the case, I should wish you well and be grateful."

"A slave, eh! Don't look like it! Dark, certain, but not brown, as many a white woman I know."

"Will you be pleased to listen to what I have to say?"

"Go ahead," the President said, placing a chair for her; and taking a seat for himself, he crossed his long legs and prepared to listen.

"You are going out this afternoon?" she said in a hesitating manner.

"Well, I did think of it. If I can get through with business."

"Over the bridge to Alexandria, perhaps?"

"That's so; I did think of it."

"I knew it," she cried.

"The blazes you did! Air you a witch?" he asked in amazement.

"No, President; but though no witch, I may be able to do good service to the State and yourself."

"What's my going over the bridge to do with the State?"

"A great deal. It is possible you would never come back again."

"Ah! Is that it?" and he made a motion with his finger across his throat, significant enough.

"No; I don't think they mean assassination; but if 'twere any trouble, they would not stand at it, I am quite sure."

"Kidnapping, eh? and throat cut if I ain't quiet? Great thing, this Presidency, miss. Reckon I had a quieter time splitting rails. Let's have the particulars."

"Will you promise me, sir, not to take any steps to arrest the people concerned in the affair?"

"No, I'm d—— if I do! If you'll tell me who they air, I'll see they have a pretty lively time of it, or my name ain't Abe Lincoln."

"Then, sir, I am silent. I am sorry I said so much. These men will assuredly gain their end if they remain at large in Washington; and without my aid you cannot discover who they are."

"Don't seem much better with your aid, miss. Seems you want me not to harm them."

"No, and you must pledge your word not to attempt to harm them."

"Mebbe you'd like me to give them a good place all round under government?" he asked, ironically, and with a peculiar smile.

"No, sir; but I see you are not inclined to listen to me."

"I'm ready enough to listen, but whar's the use? My word can't be broke, and you want me to promise to let 'em scot free. Can't see that notion."

"You will not promise?"

"Sartin no ; unless you can show me as safe a plan as locking them up."

"I can ; not only is it as safe a plan, but your only plan ; for refuse to adopt it, and I refuse to speak," said Lola firmly.

"Go ahead."

Then he leaned his head on his two hands and gazed at her hard in the face.

"Well, then, I will tell you. Frighten them away."

"Scare 'em, eh ! How ?"

"I will tell you, if you will promise what I ask."

"How do you know that a scare will frighten them away ? and how am I to scare 'em ?"

"The men I speak of have been for weeks in Washington, unknown, unsuspected. They are all members of a secret society, and are sure to carry out this affair."

"That means the kidnapping o' Abe Lincoln ?"

"Yes : well, sir, if they were aware that the whole plot was known to government, they would not remain a minute longer in Washington than they could help. Why, they would know that at any moment they might be seized and hanged. Of course, if they were thoroughly warned that the government was aware of the plot, they would take it for granted that their names and all particulars were also known."

"That's so. And you mean you won't give their names ?"

"No ; I will not."

"Why ?"

"Because I have an interest in some of these conspirators. I have tried persuasion, entreaty, everything, all in vain. I wish to save you ; but I tell you frankly that were the plot to assassinate you, I would allow them to do it, and run the chance of escaping rather than betray them and consign them to a certain death. Believe me, President, when I tell you that I wish to serve you, if I can do so without betraying certain of these persons, and if I betray one, I betray all ; or at

least, run the risk of it. I wish to save you, and save them from an attempted crime, by driving them away."

"And I suppose if it was a question between me and these amiable friends o' yours, you'd say, 'let old Abe slide'?"

"Yes, if you mean that if it was a question of your life or theirs, I should allow you to fall."

"H—m—m—m! now that's what I call right down plain talk. Can't say it's 'xactly pleasant, but it's better than a pack o' lies."

President Lincoln relapsed into thought for a full minute, keeping his eyes on the ground. Then he suddenly raised them, looking keenly at the actress, and said—

"Young woman, I believe you. You're true grit, and I don't blame you for not betraying your brother or sweetheart, or whoever it may be. Some people would think I were more important—kinder—but a true woman—her own people are more than all the kings and presidents in the world. So, now blaze away; tell me just what you like and no more. I promise I won't try to find out nor get punished any of these chaps; that is, if they take themselves right clean off and don't come nigh this place no more."

Then she told him so much as she thought prudent of what she knew. Not all by a long way, but quite enough to convince the President that he really was in danger, surrounded by spies and traitors.

He thought for a bit, and then broke out laughing.

"I have it," he cried. "I've got it; they wouldn't harm me if I went along with them quietly, would they?"

"No, I believe—I am sure they would not: they think you more valuable alive than dead."

"Now that's kind of 'em," the President said, grimly. "I'm just o' the same opinion myself."

He rang a bell and an attendant appeared.

"Send Ben Houston here; find him smart; I want him."

The Rebel Privateer.

“Good-bye, young lady. Many thanks. I shall remember you. Come when you like to see me. When shall it be?”

“Nay, sir; come and see me. I play in a new piece to-morrow night.”

“Oh! at Ford’s Theatre? Ain’t been for a long time, but I will some of these days. Good-bye.”

Well would it have been for unfortunate Lincoln had he never again entered the theatre in question, for it was there he received his death-wound.

CHAPTER XL

DOLORA'S RUSE.

DOLORA VELASCO, now that she had broken the ice and knew the course the President was about to adopt, lost not a moment's time. She knew where Hubert Glynne lodged, and knowing also his obstinate dogged nature, thought it possible that even when he knew that the scheme had failed, he would remain and do some desperate deed.

She had of course plenty of admirers, and for her own purposes encouraged one or two. It was necessary she should have ~~some~~ one on whom she could depend in case of necessity.

One of these she discovered was also a member of the secret society with Booth, Glynne, and others.

From him, not without great difficulty, she obtained the signs and passes of the order.

That very day she received a terrible shock. Driving back down Pennsylvania Avenue in the hack carriage which had brought her to the White House, she suddenly saw a well-remembered, feared, and hated face. That of the man called Hyena Jones.

A few moments afterwards she saw Hubert Glynne walking fast in the same direction.

"Oh heavens!" she cried; "if he, the Hyena, sees him, he will recognise him instantly and betray him, for he bears him a deadly animosity. He is sure to recognise him as easily as I did."

This hastened her actions.

The Rebel Privateer.

Within two hours Hubert Glynne received a paper, the bearer of which verified its authenticity by giving the signs and pass-words of the society of the Fiery Cross.

Hubert doubted not its authenticity for a moment.

"Nothing can be done for some weeks. The attempt was to have been made to day, but will not be by reason of its being premature. Go down the river and get on board instantly. Nothing is discovered yet, but all will be, if any of us are found now. Away. The blood hounds are on the scent. "W. B."

The initials were those of Wilkes Booth, and the writing was like his, though Hubert thought disguised. This was natural enough under the circumstances, as it might fall into any hands.

Hubert started away instantly.

Lola had reasoned well.

She said to herself—it is useless to try and get him away through fear for himself. He would stop and brave the worst ; but if he thinks his remaining endangers his comrades and risks the discovery of all, then he will go.

She was right.

He believed the document to be genuine, and so obeyed it without questions.

That evening he was put on board the little yacht, where he found that a message had likewise been received, to be prepared to receive the prisoner. It was decided to wait for Booth and the other conspirators, who would probably make for this point if they were not captured.

Here, however, we must state what was taking place at Washington.

CHAPTER XL.

ABE CHECKMATES THE CONSPIRATORS.

ON this eventful evening the President was seen to leave the White House alone, about an hour before sun-down. He wore a white beaver hat, swallow-tailed coat, and a comforter around his neck. A tall, gaunt man, of awkward gait—any one who had once seen him could not fail to recognise him again, and many were the hats which were lifted to the Chief Magistrate of the United States.

He strolled leisurely on with his hands in his pockets, towards that part of the town where the bridge crossed over the Potomac to the Alexandria Road.

He probably did not observe that he was followed by several men, at a distance sufficient to avoid observation and yet keep him in sight.

Presently one of these men, after speaking to the others, crossed over to the opposite side of the road to that on which the President was walking; passed quickly ahead of him, then re-crossed and turned back so as to meet him face to face. As they passed each other he had a good look at him and took off his hat, the President returning the salute.

Then the man rejoined his companions, and they all walked on together.

It was getting dusk when Lincoln reached the Washington side of the bridge. He was seen by those who dogged his steps to speak to the military guard at the

bridge; then he turned and entered a house close handy.

It was a cigar store, and one of the party following him saw him, with some surprise, drink a glass at the bar, and pass through to the parlour at the back. However, this was not really wonderful at all; he was a simple-minded man, and perhaps the keeper of this place was an old chum from the far west.

The men posted themselves in easy view of this place. After remaining about ten minutes they saw the white hat, swallow-tail coat, and red comforter emerge again.

He walked to the bridge: the guard turned out and saluted, and then he passed on.

"The hour is come; now for the great blow," said one of the men who had followed him.

Then there drove up a brougham.

There were four of the men altogether. Three of them got inside, and the fourth joined the driver on the box.

The carriage drove on, past the guard at the entrance to the bridge, and in a little while slowly came up with the President.

The driver slackened speed, and drove fast, by turns.

"Now go ahead," cried the one seated by his side. "There's no one within two hundred yards, and it's almost dark."

The horse was urged to a gallop, came up with and passed the President, and then suddenly halted.

The door was thrown open, and the three men leaped forth, as did one from the box. All three threw themselves on the solitary pedestrian, and in two seconds he was forced into the carriage, the other three entered with him, the door was slammed to, and away the vehicle went over the bridge at full gallop.

The horse was urged on to its utmost speed. It drew up about five miles lower down the river, near the bend of a small creek running inland. Here was moored a boat.

The carriage door was opened, and one of the occupants got out first.

"Prisoner," he said, sternly, and producing a pistol, "we do not mean to harm you personally, unless you resist or attempt to make an outcry. Should you do so, your brains will be blown out without mercy. If you intend to remain quiet the gag shall be removed from your mouth."

The prisoner bowed his head in token that he would be quiet. His hands were fastened behind him, and then the gag was removed.

"Light the lantern, one of you, and signal to the cutter. I can see her farther out in the stream," said an authoritative voice.

A lantern was lighted and moved to and fro, as a signal. Soon was heard the measured splash of oars, and a boat was seen approaching.

"Good gentlemen," the prisoner broke out in a whining voice, "what have I done to be treated like this? I'm only a poor lumberman, come up to Washington to see old Abe. We played together as boys long, long ago, at the old home. I wish I'd never left, and I reckon he does too. Let me go, do, and I'll make haste straight off home to-morrow—if I don't, roast me!"

One of the men gave a sudden exclamation at the voice and words of the prisoner.

"Give me the lantern," he cried, and snatched it from one of the others. "Who are you? speak," he cried, holding the light close to the face of the prisoner, so as to plainly reveal his features.

Before the latter could reply, he let fall the light with the one word—

"D——!"

"We've been deceived," he cried, as he picked it up again. "This is not the President! Who are you, fellow? Speak, and the truth, too, or I'll blow your brains out."

A pistol was held threateningly to the prisoner's head.

"If you please, good gentlemen, I'm a man named Ben Hooston, a lumberman down on Tennessee river. I cum to Washington jist to see my old chum now he's President, and see if he'd grown proud. Nary bit, he was jist the same as ever, and told me to meet him down at old Mother Barnaby's to-night. 'I've got a little game on there,' he said."

"The devil he did!" said Wilkes Booth, who was one of the party. "What game? and where is Widow Barnaby's?"

"Just t'other end of the bridge. I'd jist come from it when you rushed on me and bundled me into that carriage. O, and I was never so skeered in all my life!"

"Where's the President? Answer, or I'll pistol you, sure as death."

"Snakes knows whar he is now. I left him at Mother Barnaby's."

"How came you to have a hat and coat and comforter on exactly like his?"

"Like his? they are his."

"Explain."

"Sez he to me, arter he'd had a pipe, 'Ben, jist you put on these togs o' mine, and walk over the bridge; play at being President, you know. The guard will salute you.'"

"'Will they?' sez I, 'that'll be fine.' So he takes off his coat and comforter, and we changes. Reckon I ain't got much the best o' it, far as that goes, for mine are all bran new, that's more than these are."

"Well, what next?"

"Sez he, a larfin, 'Don't be surprised when you get half way over the bridge if some gentlemen was to give you a ride in their carriage. You can't be so rude as to refuse, Ben, could you?' 'Certainly not,' I says, 'that ain't our way down west.' 'Well,' sez he, 'mind you don't; you go quiet with 'em wherever they want, and they won't hurt you,' So out I goes; the sogers salutes, and I feel quite grand. You know the rest, so I need not tell you."

The conspirators listened with feelings of rage mingled with dismay and terror.

"A thousand devils!" cried Wilkes Booth; "we are betrayed. Lincoln, from some source or another, evidently knows all about this, and has played us an infernal trick."

"Did he say anything else?" one asked of the prisoner.

"He said as you were a rare lot o' good fellows, and he expected to have the pleasure o' seeing you all to-morrow."

"He don't see me if I can help it," cried one.

"Not if I know it."

"We'd best make tracks, right sharp. I shall," cried another.

"What about the prisoner?"

"Let him go. This is one of old Abe's jokes, cuss him! but it can't end at this. He thinks to nab us. Don't know, perhaps, as we've got a snug little craft here."

"What about the carriage and horse?"

"Turn the horse loose, take his harness off, put it inside, and then capsize the carriage into the river."

This conversation was carried on in a low voice.

"Prisoner," said Wilkes Booth, advancing to him, "you can go now. Give our compliments to the President, tell him we're sorry we can't see him to-morrow, but that before long he will see one of us when he least expects it. Now be off."

The prisoner was not loth to obey, and soon the five conspirators were alone together.

They turned the horse loose, threw the carriage into the river, and prepared to enter the boat; first listening to discover whether they were pursued.

"This is a nice affair, certainly. Old Abe has been too cute for us."

"By G—!" cried Booth, savagely, "I will be too cute for him one of these days!"

"We have been betrayed, that's certain!"

"I'd like to know who was the traitor. He wouldn't live many seconds if he was in reach of my pistol!" cried Booth, grinding his teeth. "Come, let us get on board. I mean to have another try yet. Next time Abraham Lincoln won't make a joke of it, I'll bet a dollar!"

Great was the surprise of Booth on seeing Hubert Glynn on board, and listening to his explanation. He had been expected to be one of the party, and they were unable to account for his absence.

Booth at once declared the document a forgery.

"There has been a counterplot at work. I wonder who has done this. I will find out. Meanwhile, it is not safe for any of us in Washington. I shall go back on board the vessel, and consult with the captain," said Hubert Glynn. "It's my opinion it's useless wasting more time over this matter. He's on his guard, that is quite evident."

"Let him guard as he will, I will be a match for him," said Booth, quietly. "I don't care if I wait months. I will either make a prisoner of Abraham Lincoln or have his life. I shall not venture back to Washington yet awhile. I shall ascertain, first, how much is known of our plan; whether we are known personally. I think not; but that some plan of Abe Lincoln's to stop the brougham and capture us the other side of the bridge must have miscarried. I fancy he thought to have his joke first and take us afterwards. He'll find it a bitter bad joke, I'll bet."

"Well, Booth, you know best. I don't feel inclined to waste any more time at present. If God wills it, despite the odds, our glorious Lee may yet inflict a crushing defeat on the Yankees, and turn the tide in our favour. I have been inactive long enough. I shall go and say farewell to my comrades on board the Black Angel; and then make my way to Richmond if possible, and strike yet one more blow for the 'bonnie blue flag!'"

"And I shall go ashore a few miles down the river, and lie by a bit. I shall communicate with a few friends by means of a private channel I know of; and if all is

safe, shall return to Washington. Therefore you may look out for news. I'll bide my time, and give old Abe one in return for his joke."

So it was settled; Wilkes Booth and one of the other conspirators went ashore a few miles lower down the river, and the little vessel continued on her course.

Booth's last words to Hubert Glynne were—

"Look out, my boy; we failed all together, but I'll succeed alone. The tyrant Lincoln shall bite the dust yet!"

The commander of the disguised merchantman (in reality the *Black Angel*)—no other than our old friend Captain George—agreed with Hubert Glynne that for the present the daring scheme of capturing the Northern President must be abandoned.

So the vessel went to the sea; and in a very short time resumed her character as a rebel cruiser.

CHAPTER XLII

THE FELL RESOLVE.

THE girl Lola congratulated herself on the success of her scheme. She had saved the President, and also others, as she fondly flattered herself. She heard from his own lips his account of how he had foiled the conspirators. Not without some anxiety she asked if he recognised any of them. He declared he never saw them, except the backs of two on the box of the vehicle.

But in a fortnight's time, to her horror, one night on coming off the stage she met Wilkes Booth face to face.

"You here! I thought you were in safety far away."

"I am safe enough here for my purpose. I did not come without first making inquiries."

"For what purpose have you come to Washington?" she asked.

"In the first place, to discover who it was that betrayed us, for betrayed we were."

"Indeed!" said Lola, with affected innocence; "and, in the second place?"

"I come with the same object as before. Lincoln, the accursed, by his liberty or life shall pay for this bloody war, and serve as a hostage of an honourable peace."

"Madman! will you never learn wisdom?"

"Will you never learn, Lola," the assassin actor said, with a quiet smile, "that men such as I am, when once they have a purpose, do not fail to carry it out—ay, at

any risk, any personal sacrifice? I shall do what I have laid out for myself though I fall myself."

The next day to this conversation there came news of the forcing of Lee's lines by Grant, and the capture of Petersburg.

There was great rejoicing at Washington that night. The theatre was filled to overcrowding; and again and again the national song was called for.

Lola had just finished her part of the performance, when she was told that Mr. Booth wished to speak to her.

"You have heard the news," he said. "Petersburg has fallen, and Richmond is evacuated. The end approaches now."

"Yes, indeed," said Lola, with a sigh; "they fought bravely, but in vain."

"That is not the end of which I speak."

"What is it?"

"The death of the arch tyrant, Lincoln; his days are numbered."

Lola was quite terrified at the expression of his face coupled with his words.

"Booth, you are not, you cannot really be serious. You would not commit murder!"

"It is no murder to kill a murderer," he replied.

"President Lincoln is no murderer."

"He is; many a man has been murdered in cold blood by his orders. Witness Captain Beall and many others. I will come to supper with you to-night."

"I have not invited you," she said, coldly.

"But you will?"

"Indeed, how can you know that?"

"I begin to feel I have the gift of prophecy," he replied. "I know the days of the tyrant slaughtermonger Lincoln are numbered. Thus far I can see into the future."

He really frightened her now. She could not but believe that he was serious, with such terrible earnestness and emphasis did he speak.

Then she thought—

“I will try if I can influence him—try if I can dissuade him, and, at all events, learn what he proposes this time. I will invite him to supper.”

He smiled, and came.

She exerted all her power, and made her fascinations felt by the fanatic actor. But she could not again succeed in eliciting from him what were his plans.

“I tell you what, Lola,” he cried, suddenly starting up, “you ask me to reveal the inmost secrets of my heart to you. A man should never do that to any other than his wife—a wife alone can be depended on not to betray her husband. A wife cannot give evidence against her husband. Be my wife, and I will tell you all, consult you, and perhaps be guided by you. Come, your answer.”

“I do not intend to marry.”

“Then don’t ask my plans. After the death of the President you will know enough.”

She shuddered.

“Ah! you cruel, implacable man! will nothing turn you from your purpose?”

Be it known that she was influenced by his terrible earnestness, and thoroughly believed that if not prevented he would carry out his threat, make the attempt, and succeed.

She could produce no effect on his stubborn will. Every other trait in his character seemed to have merged itself into a fierce desire for the blood of Abraham Lincoln. He no longer spoke of capturing him, but openly declared that the tyrant should die.

“Nothing can turn me from my purpose,” he said, in reply to her last question, “but yourself; and I know not that you could.”

“Ah, you ask what is impossible!”

“Consider, and give me an answer another time. Lola,” he cried, with sudden passion, “I love you, and I believe it is love for you so coldly received that drives me frantic with rage. Be my wife, and I swear to you

that I will forego my purpose, and Lincoln the accursed shall live."

"And if I decline?" she asked, with pale face and trembling voice.

"Then he shall die, though he had a thousand lives."

Not wishing to exasperate him further in his present mood, she said—

"I will consider."

"When will you give me an answer? To-morrow?"

"No; the day after."

"When?"

"At four in the afternoon."

"Where?"

"On the steps of the Capitol."

With this he departed, leaving her in a state of great terror and agitation.

CHAPTER XLIII.

LOLA FOUND BY HER FATHER.

THE appointed day fell on the 13th of April.

Lola was attiring herself to go out, when she was informed that a gentleman wished to see her.

She descended to her drawing-room, expecting to see Booth, though she had requested him not to visit her at her hotel.

She saw to her surprise a stranger—a tall, handsome man, of some five-and-forty years.

“Your pleasure, sir?” she said, noticing that he looked at her hard and long.

“Ah! you do not know me. How should you? You were almost an infant when I went to Spain; when I returned, you were gone, I feared for ever. Thank Heaven, after all these years I have found you!”

“Sir, I do not comprehend you,” she said.

“I will explain in due course. But first let me tell you, my own, my darling child, that I am your father.”

“My father! I never knew one.”

“You were stolen in your childhood, you and my infant son, by a treacherous enemy, and sold into slavery.”

“Ha! I have vague rememberings that I was not always a slave.”

“You were not. Thank Heaven, you are now restored to me! I obtained a trace of you only a month back from one of the guilty parties. On her death-bed she confessed her share in the crime, and gave me all the in-

ormation she could. Tell me you believe I am your father, and then you shall know all."

"I do; I do," she cried. "My heart tells me so; the voice of nature speaks for you, dear father."

"Clasping her in his arms he imprinted on her brow a fatherly kiss, then seating himself on the sofa by her side, he commenced the following narration :—

"Three-and twenty years ago I was a junior officer in the army of Spain. Having considerable interest at court, I was appointed to a subordinate command in the island of Cuba, when I was twenty-three years of age. I rapidly advanced, and by the time I was five-and-twenty was military governor of the town of Havannah, and the important fortress of Moro. As is always the case, my rapid advancement procured me as many enemies as friends—more, I am inclined to think. In the vessel in which I came from old Spain, there was also a Spanish grandee and his daughter, a lovely Castilian girl, the *Senorita Juana Ortigoza*. Her brother, *Don José Ortigoza*, and her father, *Don Orlando*, kept strict watch and ward over the young lady. Nevertheless, I had frequent opportunities—opportunities of conversing with her, and as the fair dainsel was obviously not averse to my company, I made the most of these. I declare, however, that I had no serious intentions regarding *Juana*. We had a dull long passage across the Atlantic; there were few passengers. It is not then surprising that I should seek to beguile the time in the company of this young lady. Her father and brother, proud nobles of old Castille looked on without openly disapproving. Indeed, as my own birth and fortune were good, the latter much superior to her father's, they could have had no valid objection, except that I was not of the old Castilian stock, nor a grandee of Spain. Pride and poverty go ill together, and probably father and brother thought that she might do worse than wed with an officer of good birth and fortune, and in favour with the home government.

"So their behaviour to me, which was at first repulsive

almost to the verge of offence, became modified in a measure. They were still distant and haughty, but tacitly permitted me to associate with them. I was too proud, and felt deeply annoyed at the airs of superiority they assumed.

"Juana, however, kept my rising choler from breaking forth.

"**"Pray do not take notice of my father and brother; they are absurdly proud. A ship is dull enough at all times, it would be unbearable were all sociability between the unhappy prisoners on board interdicted."**

"I did not require much persuasion. I liked the young lady much, admired her beauty, and felt grateful for the liking she had for me, so delicately and flatteringly expressed.

"We arrived at Havannah, and for the time separated; Don Ortigosa, his son and daughter, departing for an estate up the country belonging to the former. He had an idea that this estate was immensely valuable, and that for years he had been robbed by the agent he had appointed to manage it, or at all events the best had not been made of it. It was with a view to retrieve the fallen fortunes of his family that the old noble had taken this journey to the island with his family. His intention was to remain some five years, after which time he confidently expected to return to old Castille a wealthy man. Alas! he was doomed to disappointment. He found residence on the estate almost an impossibility. Surrounded with swamps it was very unhealthy, and the innumerable tribes of mosquitoes and other insects rendered life insupportable. Furthermore, he found the estate was comprised of barren and poor land, and that there was no chance of increasing the yield of sugar.

"Bitterly disappointed, he returned with his son and daughter to Havannah, and was compelled to mortgage first, and then sell the estate to raise money. All the while, however, he lived in grand style, as befitting a nobleman with so ancient a pedigree. Although this was the last possession he could depend on for raising money,

he nevertheless spent it as recklessly as though he had the mines of Peru at his back.

"The decease of his younger brother in the old country saved him from utter ruin, for he inherited thereby a sum of two thousand gold doubloons (about seven thousand pounds sterling). With this he was enabled to keep up the state which befitted his rank. He had horses and carriages, a fine mansion, servants and slaves. He gave assemblies and parties, and led a life apparently free from care.

"Our acquaintance was renewed on his return from his estate, where he remained barely a year. He was much more courteous now in his behaviour to me, and expressed his surprise and pleasure at the rapidity with which I progressed. As I have before said, by the time I was five-and-twenty I had so worked my way upwards by means of diligence and interest combined, that I was strongly recommended by the captain-general for the post of commandant of the troops at the Havannah and military governor of the town. You know, my dear daughter, that long after slaves ceased to be imported into America, Cuba received them in large numbers. In fact, Cuba and Brazil are now the only remaining slave marts. I will not here enter into the question of the morality of the traffic or the institution: suffice it to say, that the Government of Spain have always winked at the landing of slaves, and as a consequence the British and American cruisers have been unable to put a stop to it. Still professedly, however, it was illegal, and my instructions were to prevent all such operations when openly attempted, and to seize the vessels that should attempt it. But privately it was intimated to me that I need not be too zealous. The wealth of the island depends on cultivation of sugar and tobacco by slave labour, and the Home Government could not afford to dispense with the enormous revenues from that source.

"This was the state of affairs when I, to my great joy and pride, was appointed to the command of Havannah. Don Ortigoza warmly congratulated me; his son was

even more profuse in his expressions of delight, Juana alone said little, but her eyes spoke volumes. I had long known that she loved me, and I returned the feeling, though perhaps my passion was not so strong as hers. Be that as it may, we plighted our troth one to the other, and I sought her father and made him an offer for his daughter's hand. The old man was scarcely able to veil his delight beneath the mantle of haughtiness he sought to assume. I was not at the time aware of all his reasons. Subsequently I learned, principally through Juana, that her father had embarked in some dangerous speculations. It was long, however, before I knew the nature of these ventures—no other than the slave trade. He had embarked all the money he could get together in this nefarious traffic. I was shocked and grieved when I learned that my future father-in-law was guilty of such practices. Still as my directions were not to interfere unless compelled to do so, I consoled myself by saying that it was no business of mine, but in my heart I fear I wished him success. Time passed on; I prospered, and was happy in the love of Juana. A brilliant prospect was before me. The great people of the island saw that I was the rising man, and though they wondered at the reason for my rapid advancement, did not fail to trim their sails to the wind. A report grew current that I was closely connected with the Royal Family of Spain, and then all ranks and grades bowed down before me.

“One afternoon, my future father-in-law called on me and invited me to go with him for a drive in the country. This surprised me much; such a thing had never occurred before, as, although he was very courteous, even obsequious to me now, we neither of us were partial to the society of the other. However, I was unsuspecting, and consented. As it happened, however, I had some business to transact with the American Consul; and stating this to be the case, said I would be at his service in an hour's time. He was evidently annoyed at this, though at the time I could not conceive why.

"Just as I was leaving the American Consul, word was brought him that two suspicious-looking sails had been seen about, off Mantanzas, supposed to be slavers. He immediately informed me of the fact, and requested me officially to take precautions against a cargo of slaves being landed in contravention of the treaty. I replied, that if they came within my cognizance or that of any of Her Majesty's ships of war, they would assuredly be captured and condemned. He asked me to send a swift vessel in pursuit, as there was only a Yankee frigate in the harbour, a slow sailer. This I declined, repeating my promise that if the slavers were brought under my notice, I would certainly cause them to be boarded and captured. He said he had heard that a slave cargo was to be landed that night aer the fort, and asked me where I could be found in case he should have occasion to communicate with me. I replied I was going for a drive with Don Ortigoza. Then he asked me where; which I thought rather strange. However, the event bore him out. I happened to remember where my worthy father-in-law that was to be had proposed we should go, and told him.

"We went as agreed—I, Don Ortigoza, his son, and my affianced Juana. The spot chosen was a most romantic and beautiful one, and shortly before sun-down we prepared to enjoy an open-air meal, the materials for which had been provided by Don Ortigoza.

"In the midst of this a horseman galloped up with a despatch.

"It was from the American Minister, to the effect that an American barque had sighted two vessels, both crowded with slaves, making direct for the harbour of Havannah. He added that no doubt they intended to land their slaves a few miles from the fort, where there was a creek and a road leading inland.

"I rose at once, and with some expressions of annoyance, intimated my intention of returning to Havannah forthwith.

"Don Ortigoza inquiring the reason for my sudden

departure, I told him that I had received a message from the United States Consul to the effect that some slave ships were hovering about the coast, and requesting the assistance of the Spanish force under my command to prevent a landing. 'You will not interfere, I presume?' said Don Ortigoza, turning a shade yellower than his usual complexion. 'If they attempt to land slaves in the vicinity of Havannah,' returned I, 'I shall assuredly seize and condemn the vessels, and send the officers and crews for trial. Let us return at once.'

"Hereupon he declared that his horses, which had brought us, were far too fatigued to undertake the journey back before they had rested and fed. All at once he affected a wonderful care for his animals, though he was not noted for his humanity usually. Thereupon the messenger, who saw the embarrassment in which I was placed, offered me his horse. This I accepted; and though at the last moment Don Ortigoza declared that he would take me back in his carriage, he was so dilatory about it that I mounted the horse and rode away.

"I considered that my honour was at stake in the question, for I had promised the Yankee Consul that I would do my utmost to prevent a landing at or near Havannah. Moreover, my instructions were to avoid a collision with the American Government on the point, and when pressed, to perform the stipulations of the treaty, and capture slavers attempting to run a cargo.

"So I rode hard, and though the distance was full ten miles, arrived at Havannah before it was quite dark.

"I at once went to the American Consulate, and received there full particulars of the information received. Then I returned home, despatched messengers to the commanders of the Spanish men-of-war in the harbour, and was about starting myself for Port Moro, when to my surprise Juana Ortigoza entered. She was embarrassed, confused, and seemed as though she had something painful to say, which nevertheless must be done. I was astonished at their having returned so soon. The Don

must have urged the horses, of which he appeared so careful, to their utmost speed to have arrived in a heavy carriage over a bad road in less than half an hour after myself.

“At last she revealed her errand. I was struck dumb with astonishment and dismay. The slavers reported off the coast were her father’s, and she begged that I would not interfere with the landing. I can scarcely say whether I was most surprised or indignant at the attempted trick. However, I disguised the latter sentiment, and contented myself with saying that I feared it was too late. Then I bade her adieu, and hastened to Castle Moro, which commands the harbour. Imagine my surprise and anger when I was informed by those whom I had deputed to keep watch along the coast that the two vessels had anchored in a little bay not more than a mile and a half from the harbour, and were about landing their slaves.

“In less than half an hour a Spanish gun-boat was alongside, and a detachment of troops marched by land to the spot. It was a clear moonlight night. There could be no doubt that Don Ortigoza depended on my connivance, or he would not have ventured on so audacious an attempt.

“The slaves were seized, condemned, and the crew, captain, and officers put in irons. A British ship-of-war arrived in the harbour next day, and all things considered, I could not have permitted them to escape. Don Ortigoza was furious. He loaded me with reproaches bordering on insults, and declared that the man who had done all in his power to ruin him should never be his son-in-law.

“I bowed to the storm, thinking it would blow over. Indeed, I sought in every way to pacify the man, for I was sincerely attached to his daughter. Imagine my astonishment when there came an *ultimatum* from him of the most arrogant kind—no less than that if I did not indemnify him in full for the enormous loss he had sustained, he would not consent to honour me with his

daughter's hand. I could scarcely believe he was serious, and sent back a written reply, explaining to him that what he asked I could not grant, but in every way respectful and deprecatory in tone. Then came a letter from Juana herself. This was a thunderstroke to me. She declared in plain words that if I did not comply with her father's demands, she wished no further communication with me.

"In reply I sent back everything I had ever received from her in the way of letters, love-tokens and so forth. Then I shut myself up, going out only when duty compelled me to do so.

"In a short time an opportunity was offered me of re-visiting old Spain. I was granted a year's leave of absence, and as I could, moreover, greatly improve my prospects by a visit to court, I embraced the opportunity. I was not wrong in this latter conjecture. I returned with increased honours, and, what is more to the purpose, a lovely young wife, one of the maids of honour at the Spanish court. She was your mother, Lola; her name before marriage being the one you have so long borne—Dolora Velasco.

"The old Don and his son had never calculated I could have taken such a step. Their plan was to make use of my affections for Juana to bend me to their purpose; this was no other than to exact what they chose to call compensation from me for the seizure of Don Ortigoza's vessels by my orders. My sudden departure, however, upset all their plans; and when they learned that I had returned with a wife from old Spain, their rage knew no bounds.

"And now I come to the most powerful part of my story.

"Poor Juana was betrayed. She did not write the offensive letter which caused me to return all her little presents and letters; but they hired a woman to imitate her writing and forge her signature. Poor girl, it broke her heart! She had been hoping and praying month after month for my return, when she doubted not that a reason-

ciliation would take place, as she was unaware that she had given any cause for offence. When she learned that I had brought a wife back with me she swooned away, and never held up her head afterwards. In less than a twelvemonth she retired to a convent.

"Meanwhile, however, I was subject to all sorts of indignities and insults from Don Ortigoza and his son. The young man affronted me in public—struck me, indeed. We fought, and I wounded him desperately. Then the old man challenged me; but the captain-general interfered, declared I was not forced to fight two members of a family, and bound the Don over to be of good behaviour or leave the island, whichever he pleased. He was forced on this to restrain the open expression of his hatred, but none the less he resolved on revenge. With cruel craft he lulled my suspicions to sleep by abstaining from any act of open hostility.

"A year passed on and then he returned to Spain. But it seemed as though fortune was determined to bring me and my enemies together. A small piece of land, all he had retained of his estate on the island, was discovered to possess mineral wealth, and on investigation it proved to be exceedingly rich.

"Don Ortigoza came back from old Spain a rich man. Still for a long time he did not molest me in any way, and but for the scowling looks of himself and son, it might have seemed that the past was forgotten. Five years had elapsed from the day when I married your mother; two children were born to me, you, Lola, who at the time were about four years of age—the darling of your parents' hearts—and Sebastian, a year younger.

"Then the thunderbolt fell!

"One morning both of you were missing, as also the nurse in whose charge you were. This woman, a Cuban by birth, with negro blood in her veins, returned in the evening in a state of great excitement; her clothes torn, hair dishevelled. In answer to our agonized inquiries, she declared that in the dead of night she had been seized, gagged and bound; that the two children, you and your

brother, were wrapped in shawls, and then all were taken out through the shrubberies at the back of my house, and placed in a carriage, which drove rapidly off. After a drive of some eight hours, the carriage stopped, and she was bidden to alight and go where she pleased. Her account was confused and vague in the extreme. She could not say where this place was, nor describe satisfactorily how she got back. However, we had no suspicions, and instead of wasting time in reproaching her, took measures for the recovery of our children. Don Ortigoza sent an insolent letter of condolence. Then we knew that he was at the bottom of the affair. But from that day until a few weeks since I have never been able to get any clue to the fate of my lost children. Your mother died of a broken heart shortly afterwards, and I was left alone in the world.

"Ambition and constant employment were my only solace. When I was five-and-thirty I was appointed to the high post of Captain-General of Cuba, which I hold to the present day. On her death-bed, about a month ago, the nurse who had assisted in the abduction was smitten with remorse, and sent for me. She told me that you had been taken away by men hired by Don Ortigoza, with her assistance; that you were carried to the sea-coast, and handed over to a slavedealer, who promised to sell you as slaves in the Southern States of America. Too well he kept his word. Previously, however, she had fastened round the arm of each of you a piece of white ribbon, on which was written your first name and the maiden name of your mother.

"Dolora Velasco, Sebastian Velasco.

"All this she confessed to me, but declared she could not tell her motive for tying the ribbon with the inscription around your arms. She declared that it was an inspiration from Heaven, in order that one day the father might recover his children. Be that as it may, was by this means that I traced you. I heard of you in New Orleans, and with difficulty ascertained that you had come hither. Sebastian I discovered had en-

listed in a Federal regiment. Money could not purchase his discharge, as the officer concerned declared that he must await instructions from Washington. So I came on here with the double purpose of finding you and arranging for the immediate discharge of my son from the Federal army. I have succeeded in both, having met with the utmost courtesy from the officials, from the President downwards, when they were apprised who and what I was. That, Lola, is the history of your birth, abduction, and the fortunate means by which recovered you."

CHAPTER XLIV.

LOLA FAILS TO KEEP HER APPOINTMENT.

LOLA now, at her father's request, gave a full history of her own fortunes, from the earliest of her recollections down to that time. It is superfluous to repeat this, as the reader is already in possession of all.

Her father spoke with the utmost warmth and enthusiasm of Hubert Glynne, her one time master.

"I thank Heaven, Lola, you fell into such good hands. If ever it is my lot to meet with that gallant and honourable Southern gentleman, there is nothing within my power I will not do to show my gratitude."

"He was in Washington a few days back," Lola said. "The madman, trusting to disguise, ventured to engage with other conspirators in a most dangerous plot. I tremble to think of the consequences had he been taken."

A clock chimed on the mantelshelf.

"Ah! I had forgotten! It is too late I fear. I had an appointment."

"With whom, my child?"

"I need have no secrets from you; it was with an actor named Wilkes Booth. He too is engaged in the same desperate scheme; and it was in the hope of dissuading him I was to meet him."

"Have you, then, so great an interest in this Mr. Booth?" her father asked, keenly regarding her.

"No, that is not my only reason," she replied, fearlessly meeting his gaze; "though, as he has done me good service, I owe him some gratitude."

"If he has served you, Lola, he can command me any services at any time."

"I cannot in honour tell you more, dear father," she went on to say, "as I received the knowledge in confidence. I have used it prudently. By means of it I have caused Hubert Glynne to leave this, to him, most perilous place. As for Booth, he is a madman, a fanatic, and I scarcely know how to deal with him."

"My daughter," the father said, laying his hand on her head, "I have the most implicit confidence in you. Do as you please; I have found my children, and for very joy would be their servant."

"Then we will go to the theatre to-night, and to-morrow for the last time I shall appear in public. My stage career has been brief; and, unlike many, the ending is a happy one."

This, be it remembered, was on the 13th of April, 1865.

Lola and her father occupied that night a box on the grand tier. In the course of the performance she caught a glimpse of a cloaked figure standing at one of the wings, regarding them, as she thought, with a vindictive scowl.

"It is he!" she whispered to her father. "There he stands! His looks terrify me. May I go round and speak to him? Indeed, indeed it is important."

"My daughter, I have implicit faith in your prudence and judgment; do as you please. You have found a father, not a master and tyrant."

With a grateful look, Lola went out and by the back way to the stage. But she could not succeed in finding him whom she sought. He had disappeared, as though he guessed her intention when she left the box. Nor was he seen again that night.

CHAPTER XLV.

THE FATAL FOURTEENTH OF APRIL.

ON the following evening Lola was early at the theatre, her father occupying the same box. The President and General Grant were to be present, so Lola's last appearance was to be on an occasion of exceptionally great importance.

Never had she looked more beautiful than on this night. There was a light in her eye, a proud consciousness in the expression of her face, which seemed to say, "I am not a slave, and never should have been a slave. I have no taint of the despised negro-blood in my veins."

Loud were the plaudits which greeted the young actress, resplendent in her loveliness, as she appeared on the stage, louder still those which called her before the curtain at the conclusion of the piece in which she played.

She appeared to the call, and gracefully bowing her farewell, withdrew for ever from the footlights. She remained behind the scenes, however, for some considerable time, talking cheerfully with the actresses and actors, and bidding them farewell, for she had been on excellent terms with all when she was herself but a poor girl striving to earn an honest living. It is not too much to say that she had not an enemy in the theatre.

After a quarter of an hour thus spent, she thought it time to return to her father, and was about to do so when the stage was cleared and the curtain rose. It was

now impossible for her to cross (for she was on the wrong side), and she could not regain her box without going out into the street and round to the front entrance.

Feeling disinclined to do this, she remained, thinking to have an opportunity to do so between the scenes. An actress waiting to go on in her turn detained her, and she lost one chance, so had to remain for another.

The lady with whom she had been talking was called on, and she was left alone at the wing.

The piece was "Our American Cousin;" and as she had never witnessed it, she felt rather curious to know how the actor who played Asha Trenchard would acquit himself.

All at once she heard a voice close to her, and started violently.

"Traitor and false woman! I have seen you with him for whom you scorn me. You have broken your word. Wait where you are, and see how Wilkes Booth keeps his!"

Before she could recover from the agitation into which this startling address threw her, he was gone. She hurried a few paces after him as she saw him glide away towards the door leading to the dress-circle and the grand tier of boxes, but stopped. "The madman! he will not let me explain; he is jealous of my father; but why should I explain? What right has he over me? What meant his strange words, 'Wait where you are; see how Wilkes Booth keeps his'? Surely he does not intend violence to the President?"

A terrible suspicion shot through her mind, which filled her with horror.

The next moment she heard the sharp report of a pistol, then a few moments' pause, and then she heard the sound of a heavy fall on the stage. She knew not what had happened, but where she stood she saw a man brandishing a knife, and heard him shout—

"Sic semper tyrannis!"

She recognised Wilkes Booth; he rushed off the

stage, paused close to her, and cried in tones of exultation—

“I have kept my word, false woman! The South is avenged. The President is dead!”

Then she heard the shrieks of Mrs. Lincoln from the President's box, the wild shouts of the audience, and amidst the terrible tumult and confusion she swooned away.

CHAPTER XLVL

THE OCEAN DEPOT.

THOUGH the surrender of General Lee virtually ended the prolonged and desperate struggle of the South for independence, all resistance and acts of warfare did not cease therewith. General Johnston did not surrender for some time after, and Kirby Smith, in the far South, prolonged the now hopeless contest still longer.

It is not, however, with the few struggling remnants of the once splendid Southern armies, guerillas, freebooters, and self-constituted bands, with which we have now to do.

Long after the soldiers of the last Confederate regiment had laid down their arms and surrendered, defeated by the overwhelming force of numbers, but not dishonoured, rebel cruisers kent the seas. It is by no means strange that these vessels should remain in ignorance of the terrible events that had happened. Except from a neutral port, they could get no reliable news. It was not reasonable that they should take the word of the crews and officers of captured ships. The dodge of saying that "peace had been proclaimed," had been resorted to during the war by vessels overhauled by rebel steamers many times, but without success.

More than a month then after the surrender of General Lee, two vessels might have been seen sailing across the North Atlantic, one coming from the south, the other from the west.

The first of these is the rebel steamer *Fiery Cross*, the other the *Black Angel*, with both of which vessels the reader is already well acquainted. They are making the best of their way to the rendezvous—the island discovered by Stanton Glynne, which has been used as a depot for captured ships and merchandise.

Since we have last visited this place it is greatly altered; not in its aspect from without, but within the creek and lake-like harbour. Here are assembled some ten more vessels dismantled, moored in the lake or to the shore, and left to take their chance. On shore is stored an enormous collection of merchandise, provisions, arms, ammunition, and last, though by no means least, coal.

When last the two rebel vessels had visited this ocean depot, it was with triumphant pride the commanders surveyed their treasure.

"Ah!" said Stanton Glynne, to his brother Hubert, "when the war is over we shall have a fine time of it. The prize-money we shall realize from all this will pay the value of our ruined plantations ten times over. Every seaman on board either of our ships will be independent for life."

This was before the series of terrible disasters culminating in the defeat of Lee and capture of Richmond.

After a brief stay to recruit the men, and give them a run ashore, each of the two ships put to sea again; that under the command of Stanton Glynne seeking the south cruising ground, while the *Black Angel* roamed in the Caribbean Sea and Spanish main.

The desperate enterprise which was to turn the fortunes of the war, the capture of the Northern President, was the offspring of the brain of Hubert Glynne. We have seen how it failed, and how the prime instigator thereof was induced to relinquish the attempt for the present at least; also the dreadful termination to which the passions of the fanatic Booth brought a design which was originally destitute of cruelty or blood-thirstiness.

The two years had all but elapsed from the day on

which Juliana elicited a promise from the commander of the *Black Angel* to meet her in Havannah.

A few days before the expiration of that time the two vessels once again, and for the last time, rendezvoused in mid-ocean, and again, after a few days' rest, set sail, this time together. The island of Cuba was their destination, and then Hubert Glynne, stanch of purpose and not to be daunted, proposed to make his way to Washington, and see if there was a chance for another attempt. He knew not that the war was over, the President assassinated, Wilkes Booth shot, and his accomplices in prison.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

THE LAST CRUISE OF THE BLACK ANGEL.

ONE bright June day the inhabitants of Havannah are aroused by the sound of a brisk cannonade out at sea.

This is a legitimate matter for wonder, as the great struggle between the contending factions of the American Republic has been decided some two months.

Five vessels can be discerned in the offing, all steamers, and, as it appears from the puffs of white smoke jetting from their sides, all were engaged.

We will transport ourselves on board one of these, the Black Angel, now heading for the shelter of neutral land, followed at a little distance by that smaller scorpion of the sea, the Fiery Cross.

The latter vessel is on the starboard quarter of the other, and each keeps firing at intervals from her swivel gun at the enemy astern.

A running fight has been maintained thus since dawn, when the two rebel ships suddenly find themselves in the presence of a vastly superior force of the enemy. To stand and fight was such rash, obvious, and certain destruction, that the commander of each at once made sail to get away from the enemy, and all haste was made in getting up steam. There was no time for any disguise or deception. There were heavy rain squalls about just before dawn, and as one of these cleared away, the five ships were revealed to each other scarcely a mile apart. The two rebels gained at first by reason of their superior

sailing speed; but an unlucky shot from the Powhattan, one of the enemy, damaged some of the machinery of the smaller vessel, and thus, just as there was a good head of steam, she was compelled to go at half speed, the Black Angel doing likewise to keep her company.

“Cast loose the guns! Man the starboard broadside! We must stand and fight, or our consort will be overhauled and sunk.”

Such was the command addressed by the commander of the larger of the two steamers fleeing before the superior force of the enemy, consisting of one iron-clad steamer; one steam frigate, carrying four heavy shell-guns, a pivot, and ten on each broadside; and a large sloop of war. Great odds—terrible odds—to talk about standing and fighting against. Nevertheless, it was absolutely necessary for the larger rebel vessel to wait for the smaller one, which, half crippled, was making the best of her way under sail and steam, banging away with her guns as defiantly as though the odds were on her side. Before them lay the land of the island of Cuba, Spanish territory, where, if they could but once reach it, they might hope to find a haven of safety. The foremost of the Yankee ships was the sloop-of-war, the Delawarr, distant about a mile and a half. She came gaily on, firing her long guns as fast as possible—too fast for good aim, the water around the Fiery Cross being continually splashed by shot and shell, though for some time none had hulled her. Now, however, the Fiery Cross turns on her pursuer, and as her broadside is brought to bear, delivers it with good effect. The iron storm goes hurtling through the air, and the splinters flying on board the Yankee show that it has told. There is evidently some confusion on board, and she goes widely from her course. The rebel meanwhile pays off, and throwing in shot apace from her swivel and shell guns, goes on her course.

The other two Yankee ships are more than two miles astern, and therefore do no damage. The smaller rebel has taken advantage of the short passage of arms between

her consort and the foremost enemy, and is now well ahead. The Black Angel, the swiftest of the five, dashes on at full speed, and is now alongside the other. The Cuban shore looms pleasantly ahead, distant barely three miles.

"We are within three miles of the shore," said Captain George to his first-lieutenant, in exultation.

"These fellows care no more for the laws of neutrality than they do for any others of God or man. Might is right; that is the law of the Yankees, and will be to the end of time. Eternal curses on them!"

A round shot hurling overhead here struck the funnel, cutting it in two. The next moment the Fiery Cross, which had been going under sail and steam on a parallel course, suddenly gauged and stood across their bows.

"Starboard!" shouted the captain of the Black Angel, and added, in an under tone, "Her tiller ropes have been shot away, and the man at the wheel killed. I can see them carrying away his body. It's getting very hot, and will be worse presently, if they don't respect neutral waters."

This was evident enough. Their enemies were gaining fast on the two Confederate ships.

Presently away went the mizen-gaff of the Black Angel, flag and all, from the effect of another shot.

"Hoist a flag at the main-royal truck, another at the fore, and another at the mizen. If we are to be sunk, we'll go down with our colours flying."

It soon became evident that the smaller of the rebel vessels must inevitably fall into the hands of the foe. Accordingly, a signal was hoisted on board the Black Angel to get out the boats and transfer the crew. For this purpose, speed was slackened, and amidst a momentarily increasing fire the operation was carried out with but small loss. Then, at full speed of sail and steam, on dashed the rebel ship, no longer compelled to wait for a crippled vessel. It seemed now as though she might effect her escape, or at least take refuge in harbour before being overhauled. But the wind drew more round off the

land, and in order to maintain her superiority of speed, it was necessary to keep under sail. The vessel was still within range; shot and shell splashing into the sea, and throwing up columns of water all around. Her captain and officers, assembled on the quarter-deck, watched the white smoke jetting forth from the ports of the enemy, and trembled for the coming of the iron messengers.

At last a large shell struck her full on the quarter, a few inches only above the water-line. It burst in the engine-room, killing or wounding every man near there, and disabling the engines.

Now she had to depend on her sails only.

"It is all over," said Captain George to Stanton Glynne. "See there goes the poor little Cross."

As he spoke a column of flame and sparks shot aloft, and was followed by a loud explosion.

A slow match having been applied to her magazine, she had blown up.

The ship was now headed straight for the land.

"We will make for the little creek," said the captain to Hubert Glynne, "where, two years ago, you bade farewell to Juliana Cordova. Surely, they will not so daringly violate Spanish neutrality as to follow us in."

It seemed doubtful whether they would ever reach the wished-for haven, but just at that moment the wind hauled farther off and freshened very much.

"Ten minutes more and we shall be in shelter," cried Stanton Glynne, nervously.

The ten minutes passed, during which the Black Angel received three more shells in her hull, and a fourth cut away her main topmast. She was now little better than a wreck; her decks torn and splintered by the huge shells which had burst on board, to say nothing of the round shot which ever and anon plunged into her helpless hull.

Just as she rounded the point of land at the entrance of the little bay and headed right in, the first-lieutenant, who had been below, came aft, and with great coolness announced to the captain—

"The vessel is sinking, sir."

"Throw the guns over board!"

This was at once set about. Many of the crew actually wept as they helped to consign the cannon they had so often worked to the deep, and the doomed vessel commenced to labour heavily, rolling from side to side like a drunken man.

"Out boats on the lee side!"

This was on the side not exposed to the fire of the enemy, which was still maintained with terrible intensity. The decks now presented a dreadful sight, covered with splinters, spars, and cordage; the sand with which they had been sprinkled dyed with blood; dead and wounded men lying about in all directions.

The officers, however, retained their coolness. Captain George and the brothers Glynne walking calmly amidst the scene of destruction and carnage, and seeing to the launching of the boats.

The air seemed now alive with shot and shell, not a moment elapsing without the howl of one of these dread missiles proclaiming the cruel nature of the conflict, or rather the pursuit, for the Black Angel had long been incapable of resistance.

"The wounded first! Let not a man enter a boat till the wounded are safe."

Five minutes accomplished this, and in five more all the boats were filled, crowded to excess by the seamen; for each moment it seemed as though she would go down. The hope that the enemy would not follow into Spanish waters was soon put at rest, for, without a moment's hesitation, two of the enemy's ships followed into the bay.

Just as they did so, the Black Angel commenced to settle down by the head.

There was only one boat remaining, and into this Hubert Glynne, Captain George, and Wharnccliffe were entering, when a round shot struck the bulwarks close to where they were standing, sending the splinters in all directions. Two of the sailors and our three friends were hurled to the deck wounded. Hubert Glynne's

left arm was much bruised and lacerated, and his head cut. Captain George had his wrist broken, and received a wound in the side; while Stanton Glynne was struck on the shoulder and head, and stunned by the concussion.

However, with assistance they managed to get into the boat, and were rowed as quickly as the exhausted and wounded sailors were able, away from the sinking ship and towards the shore, distant only some two hundred yards.

Meanwhile, the pace of the pursuers was slackened. It seemed like hitting a dead enemy, pouring shot and shell into the shattered hulk of the *Black Angel*, now working as it were in the last agonies before going down. They even had the cruelty to fire several shots at the unprotected boats as they made off. The last was the gig containing the two captains, and Wharncliffe the lieutenant. Their progress was slow, for three of the oars were broken by a round shot shortly after leaving the vessel. The other boats had all made the shore and the crew had landed, carrying the wounded with them into the bush.

As the last boat touched the ground, Captain George, the least hurt of any, leaped out into the sea, and taking Stanton Glynne, still almost insensible, in his arms, carried him ashore. Hubert followed, and then all three turned and surveyed the wreck.

"There she goes! Farewell, my bonnie bark!" said the Englishman, sadly.

The *Black Angel* is seen to make a violent plunge forward and disappear beneath the waves. The water was shallow, and could not cover her masts. The main and foretop masts had been shot away; but at the mizen royal-masthead there is still defiantly hoisted the rebel flag. The Yankee continued firing at this in spite or anger. At last a shot struck the part of the mast above water, and down with a crash fell the white flag with starry cross into the sea, emblematic of the fate of the Confederacy.

“All is over !” said Hubert Glynne, sadly. “Let us save ourselves, and hope for better days. It may not be this year nor next, nor for many years ; but ultimately the South shall achieve independence. We may sink now like our gallant ship ; but as the waves close over us, our motto shall be *Resurgam !*”

THE END

W^m. Stephens Hayward's

CELEBRATED NOVELS.

Post 8vo. Picture Covers. Price 2/- each

The Black Angel.
The Star of the South.
The Fiery Cross.
The Rebel Privateer.
Love's Treason.
Tom Holt's Log.
Demons of the Sea.
Love and Adventure.
Run away from Home.

The Meeting of the Thunder
The Golden Reef.
The Idol's Eye.
Dr. Andrew Lorrimer.
Lord Scatterbrain.
Wild and Wonderful.
Rodney Ray.
The Cloud King.
Mildred's Cross.

Ned Kelly

The Ironclad Australian Bushranger.

Containing nearly 500 pages, and
38 Illustrations.

Demy 4to. With Handsome Wrapper.
